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OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

A Responsive Prayer

Written for the Consumers' League

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

Almighty and merciful God, we beseech thee to hear the desire and prayers of our heart for all who labor.

*For all who till the land and break the rocks,
For those in frequent peril of the sea,
For those in the dark and danger of the mines,
We pray to thee, O Lord.*

*For all who labor in factory, store and office,
For all who work on the highways of commerce,
For all who teach and transmit the treasure of intelligence,
We pray thee, O Lord.*

*For men who toil in places of special danger,
For women who are bearing and rearing children,
For women who add the strain of labor to travail and motherhood,
We call to thee, O Lord.*

*From child-labor, from ill-paid toil, from the drive of greed,
From overwork and the fear of unemployment,
Good Lord, deliver us all.*

*From toil, without joy and hope,
From labor without pride and honor,
Save us, O Lord.*

*That the oppressed may feel the salvation of freedom;
That the immigrant may live among us without suffering contempt,
That our commonwealth may be loyal to the higher law of justice,
That industry may join all workers in good will and brotherhood;
We beseech thee to hear us, O God.*

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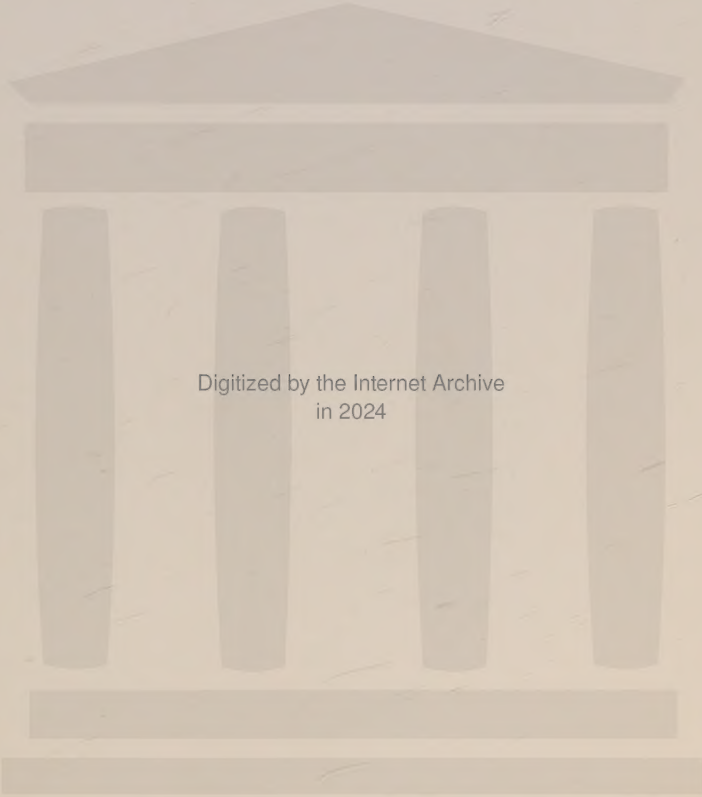
O God, we thank Thee for this universe, our home; for its vastness and for its riches and for the manifoldness of its life!

We praise Thee for the arching sky and the blessed winds, for the driving clouds and the constellations on high! We praise Thee for the salt sea and the running water, for the everlasting hills, for the trees and the grass under our feet!

Grant, we pray Thee, a heart wide open to joy and beauty, that we shall not pass heedless and unseeing, when e'en the thornbush by the wayside is aflame with the glory of God!

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

—WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH.



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THE WILLIAMS' PORTRAIT OF WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

PRESIDENT ALBERT W. BEAVEN

THE beautiful portrait of Walter Rauschenbusch presented as the frontispiece in this issue of the Bulletin was done by a personal friend. The original was formally and publicly accepted as a gift by the school in connection with the lectures on the Rauschenbusch Foundation at the spring convocation, April 2-5.

Dr. John R. Williams, who made the portrait in crayon, is one of the best known physicians in the city of Rochester and during the life of Dr. Rauschenbusch was his personal physician. Having achieved the mastery of his own profession, accomplishing remarkable scientific work in research in the field of the control of diabetes, Dr. Williams two years ago took up the conquest of the art of portraiture. He began it simply as a hobby, as prior to that time he had taken up the subject of landscaping as a hobby, and today has to his credit much of the landscaping of the Oak Hill Country Club. He now has created a number of portraits of unusual merit.

This portrait of Dr. Rauschenbusch has, we believe, captured to a remarkable degree the personality of the man back of the picture. The rugged cast of the face, the twinkle of the eye, the kindly, quizzical expression so familiar to all those who knew him and loved him, show that Dr. Williams has not merely made a picture; he has expressed the soul of the man back of it.

The Williams' portrait adorns the President's reception room.

THE CASTLE OF MY SOUL

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

May, 1918

FAR away, on a wind swept height, my soul has built her a castle, whither she retreats from the strife of men, and when the great gate swings to its lock, my soul is well content with its company.

For in the painted hall, under the groined arches, she has supped with great men, Isaiah has chanted to her in Hebrew, and Plato has discoursed in Attic, and many an historian has lifted the fringe of the Curtain of Seemly Lies that wraps the Book of Reality.

Springing from the west wall, and overhanging the pleasant Valley of Dreams, is the Balcony of Laughter. Here Walther von der Vogelweide told of the song of a certain nightingale, and Horace strummed in Sapphic measure to the eyebrows of Lalage, looking thirstily for the cool joy of Falernian, and finding it not.

High above the castle, stretching into the starry infinity, is the watch tower of my soul. Thence she looks down on the kingdoms of this world and wants not their glory; and forward to the Things That Shall Be; and up to the sickle of Venus, and the rings of Saturn, and the belt of Orion, and the glorious locks of Cassiopeia, and my soul leaps to the Milky Way, bounding from star to star, where God strode down through Eternity when the morning stars sang to Him in the Youth of the World.

But beneath the castle is a dark corridor, which my soul would fain forget and cannot. However softly she steals past, ghosts creep forth, crying softly, and bidding her remember how she trampled on trust and love in blind ignorance or blinder anger. And she remembers. This is the castle of my soul, and when my soul has locked the gate, her nearest kin lives 10,000 leagues away.

THE SPIRIT AND SERVICE OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL*

PRESIDENT ALBERT W. BEAVEN

WE have gathered tonight, in this capital city of the nation, to recognize the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Some idea of the importance of the Council will be gained when I remind you that the actual *membership* of its constituent bodies includes almost one-fifth of the population of this country and Canada, and that its general *constituency* embraces more than one-half of the people in these two great commonwealths. The Federal Council was created by and is responsible to the various Protestant communions that comprise it. Founded twenty-five years ago in the City of Philadelphia as an experiment in church cooperation, it has grown in stability and usefulness, and today includes twenty-five of the great denominations with a membership of 22,000,000.

Religion Is Not Passing

Our generation has been marked by a rather destructive iconoclasm. Criticism has been rampant. Idealism is antiquated. In such a mood, it probably is not surprising that there should be those who would rise to tell us that religion is disappearing, that Protestantism is about to collapse and pass from the stage.

I do not care to dignify these criticisms of religion and of the evangelical churches by more than the expression of my profound conviction on two matters. First, religion is not passing. It has proved through history to be as essential to humanity as are food, family, or love of country and has again and again evidenced its powers to affect men's motives as much as any or all other forces which inspire them. Religion has been one of humanity's greatest sources of power. We are not today abandoning sources of power; we are far more inclined to go back and explore deeply to see whether there may not be *far more*, where we have already gotten *so much*.

* Delivered at the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Meeting of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, December 6, 1933, in Constitution Hall, Washington, D. C., and broadcast over a nation-wide hook-up. President Roosevelt spoke on the same program.

Protestantism Is Not Passing

Religion is not passing; this is my first conviction. And the second is just as clear, namely, that, as one of the great branches of the Christian religion, Protestantism is not passing. It has at its heart the right of men and women to interpret God and their experiences with Him according to the dictates of their own consciences. It represents in the great quest for religious reality the principle of liberty which, in spite of its critics, is the very essence of modern progress. It recognizes the right of people to organize in groups, back of their great central religious convictions. It claims that the compulsion of this inner conviction which comes as the result of the soul's direct access to God is supreme. It cannot acknowledge the right of state or worldly power to coerce it or to deny its right of expression. Some of the most glorious chapters of Protestant history have been written with this fundamental assumption as the background; witness Luther standing for his conscience at Worms, or the four hundred and seventy Scotch Free-Churchmen renouncing their state church livings and walking out into threatened poverty and oblivion. Or again, but last month, witness the three thousand pastors in the pulpits of Germany who apparently jeopardized their whole future to express their convictions in support of their interpretation of Scripture and to affirm the great principles of Christian idealism for the Church.

No, Protestantism is not passing, either there or here, and it would be a sad day if it were. Instead of having upon it the marks of decadence, it is possible that it has just begun its greatest contribution to the Christian movement.

But while it is not passing, we are just as sure that it is changing. It is changing, among other things, by the addition of new emphases.

The tendency, when we operated under the principle of liberty alone, was to make groups who came into competition with each other. This danger was recognized, and to meet it there was created, twenty-five years ago, this organization, which was described in a recent editorial in the *New York Times* as marking "a new epoch in Protestant history."

Gaining Strength by Thinking Together

The purpose in the inauguration of the Council was to offer to the various denominations such an opportunity for conference as would enable them to plan and think together, and thus avoid the overlapping

and waste that were then recognized to be altogether too prevalent.

The Council was organized, also, to offer to the various bodies an instrument for positive and aggressive united action in places where they desired to work together. Its function here may find an illustrative parallel in the engineering field. For centuries the Colorado River has received the inflow from myriads of raindrops and thousands of rivulets, and the power thus accumulated in the river was attested by its ability to cut down through stratum after stratum of the hardest rock as we see it exposed in the walls of the Grand Canyon. To men with a social and engineering vision, however, it was clear that the power thus accumulated was doing but a small fraction of the good it might accomplish for the human population adjacent to its course. They conceived the idea now being carried out in the Boulder Dam, namely, the creating of a piece of machinery that would accumulate the power then being wasted and direct it to the places of need. This is being done. When it is accomplished it is to be expected that the wilderness will blossom and blessings untold come to those near enough to share the benefits of this creative undertaking. In somewhat the same way the Federal Council becomes the additional but strategic piece of machinery which enables the latent power existing in individuals, churches and denominations to be pooled and its influence directed to the places of need.

Twenty-Five Years Ago—And Today

During these twenty-five years tremendous strides have been made in eliminating the weaknesses which were then evident, in achieving power that was then impossible, and in directing the combined force of Protestantism toward wholesome ends. A contrast between the conditions then and now makes a dramatic showing: Twenty-five years ago denominations rarely conferred with each other; now not only does the Federal Council include the twenty-five denominations of this country, but there are federations of churches in nearly fifty of the major cities of the country, and councils of churches in seventeen states.

Twenty-five years ago there was no central agency through which Protestantism as a unit could come into relation with the other two major religious groups in America—the Roman Catholics and the Jews. Today the Council maintains relations of friendly understanding, which, while calling for no compromise of conviction, make it possible for

the three bodies to join from time to time in cooperative undertakings in behalf of social betterment and human welfare.

Twenty-five years ago there was no world-wide organization of Protestantism binding the churches of different nations together. There was not even a means of conference between the American churches as a whole and the churches of other lands or any plan for bringing assistance from the stronger churches of one country to the weaker groups in another. Today, as a result of the work of the Federal Council and the World Alliance for International Friendship, co-operating with the Christian forces of Europe, there is in Geneva, Switzerland, a world headquarters for Protestantism and also of the Anglican and the Eastern Orthodox bodies. Behind this unprecedented development lay the generous efforts made by the Federal Council to assist the churches of Europe that had been devastated by the war or by its almost equally ruinous aftermath. Such aid in times of great need helped to develop the new spirit of international cooperation among the churches which culminated in the formation of the Universal Christian Council. This is, in effect, a world federation of the non-Roman churches. Of this body the Federal Council is the American Section. For the first time in history Protestantism is no longer broken up into isolated national bodies. Even in the midst of the acute political tensions of last summer the representatives of the French, the English, the American, the Scandinavian and other churches met in unbroken fellowship with German churchmen and were thus able to exert an influence in modifying certain dangerous trends in the reorganization of German Protestantism.

Twenty-five years ago the Protestant churches could not have used unitedly a great new force like radio. Today, a nation-wide network of stations broadcasts every week, from coast to coast, eleven programs sponsored by the Federal Council. The names of its speakers, such as Cadman, Fosdick, Poling, Goodell and others, have become household names. The response from all parts of the country to this radio ministry is almost overwhelming. In the past year alone 200,000 letters have been received—from shut-ins, invalids, inmates of public institutions and men and women in every rank of life.

Twenty-five years ago there was no way of expressing the collective Christian conscience on social problems. Today the new statement of "Social Ideals," as revised and expanded last year, constitutes the

most widely recognized platform of Christian social effort, and the Council is recognized as one of the powerful forces working for social justice, fair treatment for labor, and international peace.

Before the formation of the Council there was no agency for rallying church influence against racial prejudice and friction or in behalf of mutual understanding. Today the Federal Council is engaged in a persistent educational campaign against lynching, a campaign which recent events show to be terrifyingly necessary. It opposes unjust discrimination against Negroes in our economic and civic life. In its own structure and life the Federal Council is a great interracial movement, uniting the four leading Negro denominations with the white bodies in a common fellowship and a joint approach to common tasks. This is one of the most noteworthy instances of interracial collaboration anywhere in the world.

In this summary it is impossible even to list all the other achievements brought about by church cooperation through the Federal Council, but they have been most important and far-reaching.

Not a Luxury But a Necessity

There are those who speak of the Federal Council as a luxury, a super-organization with which we can dispense in this time of financial shortage. On the contrary, it seems to us the one thing with which we cannot dispense. By maintaining it we purchase increased efficiency for the work of all communions, through the elimination of waste and the means by which to do cooperative planning. It offers an agency through which we can achieve things which no one communion would dream of attempting alone, and it makes what we do and say count, where that message would never be heard if it were uttered in the twenty-five different languages of competing denominations.

On this twenty-fifth anniversary of the Council we look back to thank God for what has been accomplished, and look forward with confidence, seeking God's blessing and the support of the constituency as we face the confusing days just ahead.

How greatly the nation needs to have that section of the population which is comprised within its churches able to make their contribution to its thinking at this moment, it would be hard to overstate. The churches of a nation may not be perfect, nor the thinking of those who comprise them be infallible; but taken by and large the church people of a nation constitute a great force pulling toward whole-

some idealism and constructive moral thinking. As an institution the Church is on the side of the best. As a creator of public opinion looking toward progressive social policies, and as a generator of that will for the common good which is essential to any permanent progress in social relations, it has possibilities beyond any other institution in our society. What a tragedy it would be, then, if so great a block of the church population as is represented in Protestantism had no agency through which to focus its thought, nor any channel through which it might place that focused thought at the service of the nation itself!

Uniting Against War

We live these days, as a nation, facing issues so tremendous as probably to involve more than we can dream. Take, as an illustration, the obvious and terrible danger involved in the present move to increase armaments, with the almost inevitable war that will be its almost certain outcome. We had been building up the machinery for peace. In looking back at the last great war, we were so impressed with the hellishness of its methods, with its threat to our racial existence, with its utter futility, that almost with unanimity the nations outlawed war as a method of settling international disputes. In the light of that declaration, reduction of armaments was proposed, and we held a conference to forward that end. Now, however, all appears changed; a new race for arms seems in full swing. Spurred on by fear, stimulated by forces seeking profit in armament even at the expense of human lives, we and other nations take on new burdens to buy instruments to cut each other's throats. In spite of armament expenditures already back-breaking, we now borrow money to build a new fleet, while others, watching us, rush to do the same thing. We are told that chemical armaments are on the increase, poison gas preparations on an unparalleled scale are being produced, bacteriological armaments are being prepared, air armaments are increasing, and so much is it taken for granted that civilian populations will be threatened, that Denmark has recently announced that gas masks of various sizes are now on sale for the civilian population.

But what if this continues, does anyone doubt what the end will be? We cannot help but know that, if we allow ourselves to be launched on this current of fear and competitive hate, there is but one result. A man of another color said to me recently: "People of my

race once wondered if the white man might not destroy us from the face of the earth, but now we wonder whether, if we wait a while, the white race may not destroy itself and leave the world to us." That man is not the only one who, looking down the road we are now traveling, can see ahead the battlefield where we of the white race may march to our racial suicide.

If it is only partly true that we have come to such a moment, then now, if ever, we need those sections of our population who see the danger, who follow Him who uttered the solemn warning that "They who take the sword shall perish by the sword," to be able to mobilize their constituency and present their protest.

The Nation Needs the Churches

Some have protested that the Church should confine itself to "religion," and not interfere in the questions of justice in industry, in the matters of war and peace, in race relations, or in the control of such great commercialized traffics as liquor, arms, motion pictures, and other powerful factors in modern life. It may not be surprising that that protest has arisen. But is such a protest to be taken seriously by the nation? Of what good is conscience, of what good is any moral principle, of what good is any light and leading that come to the children of men by seeking guidance from the God at the heart of the universe, if the results of these processes of religion cannot be utilized by a nation to determine its action at the time of its great need? Christian people are called the salt of the earth, "but if the salt hath lost its savor, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast forth and trodden under the food of men." A ministry that has a message but cannot or will not speak it, is sheer loss where it should be great gain.

When a captain sails a liner across the Atlantic, it is of interest for him to look around, to know which way the tide is running, to know the effects of wind and wave upon his craft. But important as these things may be, they are trivial compared to the fact that there is in the sky a Pole Star which indicates the unchanging direction by which alone he can guide his ship. It is his calculations based on the look *up* and not on the look *down* that finally determine his safety. However much he needs the latter, without the former he is lost.

As over against the complaint that the churches interest themselves in creating opinion on public questions and express themselves

on subjects on which they are not specialists, I stand to claim that this nation, in all its history, never needed more than it does now a free and courageous pulpit and an unfettered church, that it may have the advantage of having brought to bear upon the great matters that are pending such insights as may be given to those who ask counsel of Almighty God, and seek to bring into human relations those enduring principles which are revealed in Jesus Christ, whose we are and whom we serve.

America and the other nations of the world are grappling with problems which are so profound that at the best the wisest of us can come but humbly and experimentally, hoping that we may find the right way through. We are wisely attempting to assemble the wisdom that has been accumulated by students of sociology and economics, information which comes from experiments in industry, lessons which we can learn from scanning the pages of history. We are searching everywhere for wisdom sufficient for our time. God knows that we need it! But the church contends that we need to supplement our look *around* by a look *up*. What we need to know is not alone the action that is temporarily wise, but the action that is eternally right. There must be a best way through. If there is, it cannot be hidden from the Judge of all the earth. If we are to know that way, we shall find it only as we supplement our human wisdom by that wisdom which comes down from above.

Spiritual Values Supreme

We need a spirit of prayer if only to be taken out of our parochialism and to catch the vision of the age-long purposes of the Almighty. When we face our international relations, we need to do so in a presence in which we shall be lifted above our narrow and bigoted nationalism, and be conscious, not of a god of a tribe, but of the Lord of all the earth. We need, in considering our relations between races, to stand in the presence of the Being who made us all, who is great enough to make us ashamed of our hatreds based on color and race, who teaches us that He is our Father and all we are brothers. In the midst of our discussions about commerce, and industry, and production and consumption, we need to go to some holy place where we can escape from our obsession with profits and frantic striving to heap up material power, and come to realize that by any sensible standard of measurement, human and not material values are greatest;

that any method of organized society is only as good as the chance which it gives the mass of its people to live the full life. We need to realize that any system which produces so much food that its people starve and so much clothing that they freeze, any system that can pass a law limiting the number of fish a man can take from a lake but cannot pass a law limiting the number of millions of dollars a man can take out of his fellow-men, can make one man stop expectorating in a subway for fear others will catch his disease but cannot stop another from selling arms, for profit, to gangsters who will shoot us down on our streets, or to other nations who will mow down our youth on the battlefield of tomorrow, any system that can protect property but seems impotent to protect folks—is a tragic reflection on our sanity and a repudiation of all the principles of religion.

All too eagerly have we fallen down to worship the gods of gold, to admit that only in profit can we find such forces as will enable us to make our machinery operate. Slowly and in a dazed fashion we have awaked to find that when we worship selfishness, the very temples of our selfishness come crashing about our heads. And when we sneer at God and the moral life, and think, in the midst of our glee, that we have outwitted the Ten Commandments, we wake to find ourselves robbed by the very men whom we worshipped. Can we not learn that it is not only morally but economically true that righteousness exalteth a nation, and that sin is a reproach to any people? Can we not realize the profound truth beneath the words of the Master, that "He that saveth his life shall lose it?" For, while selfishness may seem to help some at first, ultimately it wrecks us all.

The Call for Moral and Spiritual Advance

For the very permanence of our nation our citizenry must recognize the fundamental place of these moral laws. We must face the fact that without them there is no base for the structure we hope to rear. There is not a single proposal for recovery that has been made by our courageous President which does not rest for its success, far more upon the moral attitudes within our citizens than upon the laws on our statute books. The most serious question which we should now ask is this, "Does the moral idealism necessary to make these proposals for cooperation a success exist among our people?" That question is now in process of being answered. If it should be answered in the negative it would be a tragedy. If it is to be answered in the affirmative,

however, it will be because all those who see those values unite to create them. This calls for a program of moral and spiritual recovery to undergird the program of industrial and financial recovery.

It throws a tremendous responsibility upon the institutions devoted to creating those ideals and upon all people of goodwill who should stimulate their production.

Therefore, in the name of the great Christian constituency which we represent, we tonight summon the ministers of our churches to a new courage in the proclamation of their message and deeper devotion to their task, bidding them recognize that in training our children in the moral ideals of the Scripture and in inspiring our people to better living and in preparing them for unselfish cooperation they are having the high honor of laying the foundation on which all other institutions rest.

We summon the constituency of our churches to a new Christ-likeness of life, new faith in God and their fellowmen, and a larger service to those in need. We rejoice in the many ways in which President Roosevelt's program for recovery embodies Christian social ideals for which the churches have long contended, and call upon our people for the most whole-souled and unselfish support of all these cooperative enterprises of goodwill by which, under the President's inspiring leadership, we hope to achieve the better tomorrow.

A Return to God

And we summon all those who listen, to a return to God and to His principles of moral living, that we may unitedly lay the foundations of that new and better day for which we struggle, not upon the baser motive of competitive selfishness, but upon the higher and more Christ-like motive of cooperative unselfishness, upon the solid base of moral character and of life lived according to the purpose and will of God.

Centuries ago Jesus of Nazareth stood over against his own city, and seeing it absorbed in the things of time and indifferent to the things of God, said, "If thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes . . . because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation!"

In a real sense he stands over against us this day. Will America know the day of her visitation? Each one of us will have to make his own answer to that question. God help that it may be right.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

EARLE BENNETT CROSS

I

A PECULIAR quality marked the national life of the Hebrews from the beginning. Their God had come to them from without the area of tribal or national life by the tradition associated with the name of Moses. He was greater from the first than a tribal deity, not to say a chthonic god. Jahu through Moses had chosen the Hebrews to be his peculiar people.¹ He had by his might and power won the victory over all opposing forces in the world, and came to them as the supreme God. His kingdom was the world. The Hebrew people were but a small element in his world, but he chose them for a unique exaltation among his possessions. They were bound to him by a tie which was fraught with tremendous significance for the future. This bond was concluded in a covenant, to which a moral code attached itself.² Herein lies the notable genius of the Hebrew for ethics in religion. The constitution of their religion was a covenant of moral ideals. From this as their sages began to reflect on the nature of their God, they would readily discover that his essential character was reflected in this covenant as primarily moral. Thus, one may observe that the unique nature of the Hebrew religion consisted of several considerations. Their God was neither a chthonic, nor tribal God; but he came to them as supreme ruler of the world, choosing them as his peculiar people, and relating them to him by a covenant of unique moral terms.

This God who came into covenant relations with the fathers was from the first regarded as creator of the world. He came to the Hebrews as Jahu, conqueror of Rahab and all her cohorts, as the champion who had braved the forces of the watery chaos and had reduced their host to submission.³ The other gods may have been Jahu's allies against the chaos host or they may have been originally conceived by the Hebrews as elements in the conquered armies of

¹ Exod. 19:4-6 (Rd); Exod. 3:13-15 (E); Exod. 6:2-8 (P).

² Exod. 19:5, 6 (Rd); Exod. 34:10, 27 (J); 34:48 (E).

³ Ps. 87:4; 89:10; Isa. 30:7; 51:9; Job 9:13; 26:12; Jer. 5:22. Barton, JAOS xv. 1 (1891) 22f.

Rahab, her allies. In any case they were impotent before Jahu.⁴ Similarities between this tradition and that of the Babylonians have suggested themselves to Old Testament scholars for many years. Jahu in the Hebrew story bears the same glory as that which Marduk boasts in the Babylonian account of creation. A common Semitic tradition seems to lie behind the two as the source whence each people drew its concepts. The Hebrew tradition named the chaos monster Rahab, while the Babylonians called her Tiamat. The Babylonian influence on the Hebrew tradition is seen only after the exile, as in the story of creation in Genesis 1. Here the modified description of creation introduces Tiamat in the form *t'hom* (English translation, "deep");⁵ but the early Hebrew used the term Rahab. The allusions to this mythical creature are mostly in later literature but their poetic nature reveals that the monster was a well-known foe of Jahu in olden times. Such allusions could rise only after a long extant tradition of the chaos struggle in which Rahab figured. This fact speaks for a distinct Hebrew tradition. Jahu is not the least like Marduk, nor is there ground for identifying the two. Jahu was revered as liege lord of the Hebrews, and to him they conceived all other peoples and nations subject.⁶ He was Lord of all creation, and before him even the other gods were impotent.⁷

The tradition of the exodus from Egypt gave an added tone to the supremacy of Jahu over other nations and gods. This event became one of the outstanding features of the Hebrews' legal and liturgical sanctions. Whatever contrary situations might develop in the course of Hebrew history, the deliverance from Egypt rose in memory together with the tradition of the creation of the world in the battle against Rahab (Chaos) to assure the Hebrew of the potency of his God and of the ultimate realization of his suzerainty over the entire world. The world was Jahu's kingdom from the beginning.

The larger part of the evidence for such radical departure from the established theory concerning Hebrew religion comes from the cultus, and especially from the liturgical relics of that cultus which have been preserved for us in the Psalms. The Psalter has of recent years been regarded as the "hymn-book of the second temple," and as such could hardly be counted as good evidence of what the ideas of the Hebrews were in the days of the monarchies. But there is a reversal of conclu-

⁴ Ps. 82; 96: 4; 97: 7.

⁵ Gen. 1: 2.

⁶ Ps. 2, 33.

⁷ Ps. 82, 115.

sions taking place which is tending to the conviction that the bulk of the Psalter in its original unadapted form is the product of the monarchies and is, therefore, good evidence of the early ideas of the Hebrews.⁸ The rise of those psalms which are related to the coronation of Jahu are difficult to explain except they be traced to this early period. They reflect the elements of the cultus of the days of the monarchies. There appears to have been an annual feast of a particular import for the Hebrews, which was celebrated at the turn of the year. Furthermore, there are many allusions and definite features especially in the psalms of the first three books which reflect the pre-exilic period, when kings were on the throne and the ark was existent.⁹

The particular features of the cultus which interest us in this connection are the evidences that the Hebrews regarded their God as holding a universal sway. The twenty-fourth psalm with its acclamation of Jahu as "the King of glory" begins with an allusion to this world dominion.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof;
The world and they that dwell therein." ¹⁰

In the further development of the psalm there appears evidence of the tradition concerning the struggle of God with the chaos floods when he won his way to the supreme power. What other significance could be found in the lines

"For he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods." ¹¹

The sixty-seventh psalm is particularly clear in its depiction of the universality of the potential sway of Jahu.

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us,
And cause his face to shine upon us;
That thy way may be known upon earth,
Thy salvation among all nations.
Let the peoples praise thee, O God;
Let all the peoples praise thee.
Oh let the nations be glad and sing for joy;
For thou wilt judge the peoples with equity,
And govern the nations upon earth.

⁸ Sigmund Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien* II. *Die Thronbesteigungsfest Jahvas und der Ursprung der Eschatologie*, 1922.

⁹ Cf. P. Volz, *Das Neujahrsfest Jahwes*, 1912, and J. P. Peters, *The Psalms as Liturgies*, 1922.

¹⁰ Ps. 24: 1.

¹¹ Ps. 24: 2.

Let the peoples praise thee, O God;
Let all the peoples praise thee.
The earth hath yielded its increase:
God, even our own God, will bless us.
God will bless us;
And all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

Still more graphically is the reign of Jahu portrayed in the ninety-third psalm, where the chaos struggle is the chief source for the details of poetic coloring.

"Jehovah reigneth; he is clothed with majesty;
Jehovah is clothed with strength; he hath girded himself there-
with:
The world also is established, that it cannot be moved.
Thy throne is established of old:
Thou art from everlasting.
The floods have lifted up, O Jehovah,
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.
Above the voices of many waters,
The mighty breakers of the sea,
Jehovah on high is mighty.
Thy testimonies are very sure:
Holiness becometh thy house,
O Jehovah, for evermore."

The sway of Jahu extends over even the deities of earth and demonic forces of all sorts.

"God standeth in the congregation of God;
He judgeth among the gods.
How long will ye judge unjustly,
And respect the persons of the wicked?
Judge the poor and fatherless:
Do justice to the afflicted and destitute.
Rescue the poor and needy:
Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked.
They know not, neither do they understand;
They walk to and fro in darkness:
All the foundations of the earth are shaken.
I said, Ye are gods,
And all of you sons of the Most High.
Nevertheless ye shall die like men,
And fall like one of the princes.
Arise, O God, judge the earth;
For thou shalt inherit all the nations." ¹²

¹² Ps. 82.

These few illustrations taken from psalms in various books of the psalter must suffice for the present purpose. Jahu is seen to have secured the throne of the earth quite apart from the Hebrew people. He came to them as Lord of all. His conquest of Chaos and other demonic forces which had established him as King had been accomplished long before he revealed himself to his chosen people.

Outside the Psalter there appear a few references which assume significance and new clarity upon the assumption that Jahu was regarded as King. There is, for example, the puzzling reference in Hosea to the "day of our king:" "On the day of our king, the princes made themselves sick with the heat of wine."¹³ Often this is taken to mean the king's birthday. If it be taken as a reference to the day on which the coronation of Jahu is celebrated, it becomes more intelligible. Isaiah in the account of his vision by which he came to accept the rôle of prophet, speaks of God as King. "Woe is me! . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts."¹⁴ A similar ascription appears in one of the Balaam runes: "The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them."¹⁵ There may be another hint of such a concept of Jahu in the passage from Amos, "Yea, ye have borne the tabernacle of your King and the shrine of your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves."¹⁶

The universality of Jahu's sway could remain in the cultus as an expression of faith, even though the extent of the power of the Hebrews were relatively slight. Furthermore, it is clear that there is nothing eschatological in the concept of this earlier time. The world struggle lay in the past. The dominance of Jahu was an established fact, not something to be hoped for. Even the defeat and dispersion of Israel did not vitally affect the concept, for Judah remained to carry on the covenant idea. The fall of Judah, however, with the consequent demolition of national existence, wiping out the apparatus of the cultus, with disruption of the familiar and tribal associations, conspired to make eschatological hopes inevitable.

II

With the crash of national existence there came other influences which also profoundly modified the ancient ideas of the kingdom of

¹³ Hos. 7:5.

¹⁴ Isa. 6:5.

¹⁵ Num. 23:21.

¹⁶ Amos 5:26.

God. The prime entity of life had been the group during all the previous periods of Hebrew history. It was the great prophets of the early dispersion who were driven to the discovery of the individual. Nevertheless, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who thrust out individualism as a life-line to the drowning nation, still preached for the most part to the nation as such.¹⁷ They were unable to shake themselves free from the group concept, or possibly they had no wish so to do. During the years of reconstruction and during the period of the restored national existence it appears to be the fact that the group was still a prominent feature of Jewish thought. Social solidarity was the mark of Judaism the while individualism was taking a firmer root. Any attempt to understand the mind of Jesus would seem to be proceeding upon safe lines only when facts such as these great backgrounds of life are taken into account. Jesus' emphasis upon the individual appears to have been due to the necessity for awakening the world to the importance of persons as such. On the other hand, it seems only fair to suppose that his seeming neglect of the social phases of human existence, if there be such neglect in his teaching, may be due to the ancient and well-established appreciation of the group as an entity, and of group responsibility and privilege.

To apprehend the background of social solidarity in the Old Testament one may hark back to the story of Achan, whose violation of the ban on Jericho was punished by death. With Achan perished his entire family group.¹⁸ There was nothing exceptional in this execution of justice; it was but the expression in one direction of the concept of the group as the prime entity. The various obligations of kinship which appear in Hebrew life are other expressions of this same concept.¹⁹ The implications of this dominance of the group for the moral ideal are most significant. The appeal of Amos for social justice, for example, must be studied in the light from this background. Our modern summons to the individual to live in accord with ideals of justice, honesty, and fair dealing is impotent in too many cases. Until we lift the group to a parity with the individual in our thinking, we shall beat the air to no purpose. A man cannot be just until his group is just. As long as social regard, social standing, and corporal religious recognition are given to individuals who have achieved "suc-

¹⁷ Jer. 2:2, 4; 7:2; 13:9; etc. Ezek. 16, 37:11, 15ff. etc.

¹⁸ Josh. 7:24, 25.

¹⁹ Cf. E. B. Cross, *The Hebrew Family*, pp. 64 ff.

cess" by practical enslavement of workers, by child labor, by sweat shops, by gambling with other people's money, by clever evasion of social and governmental obligations, it appears that the personal morality is at a discount. Youth will not believe in moral processes as the way to success, unless the group honors and group rewards go to the persons marked by social morality. The appeal of Amos is not only to the individual, but more emphatically to the nation. A moral tone in the group life is indispensable to personal morality. The recent emergency pronouncement of the Supreme Court of this United States embodies a discovery of the most important fact that the social order has something at stake in the disputes of individuals. "Where, in earlier days, it was thought that only the concerns of individuals or of classes were involved, and that those of the State itself were touched only remotely, it has later been found that the fundamental interests of the State are directly affected; and that the question is no longer merely that of one party to a contract as against another, but of the use of reasonable means to safeguard the economic structure upon which the good of all depends."²⁰ For the Hebrew the prime entity was the group. For the Greek the individual was the chief object of attention. The modern western world has followed the Greek slavishly. It would appear that we are entering an era in which the individual and the social order shall be regarded as of equal import in moral questions. Morality will involve questions of stupendous extent and concern. Sins of dread magnitude will be discovered against which the individual is impotent and to conquer which the social order alone is adequate. Social repentance will become as important as individual repentance once was.

Out of the nomad life, then, the Hebrew came with strong tribal sentiments, and this group consciousness persisted throughout the monarchies. This emphasis upon the group as an entity may be the chief reason to account for the inability of the Hebrews to develop a concept of personal immortality. In any case this idea did not arise until foreign influences had introduced it in a time when the group idea had received mortal blows in the demolition of national life. Prior to this time the concept of immortality involved the tribe or nation alone. The individual had no existence apart therefrom in this world or in any other. *The kingdom of God for the Hebrew must have*

²⁰ Supreme Court of the United States, No. 370. Quoted from *United States Law Week*, Jan. 9, 1934. Vol. I. 19. Index 381.

been conceived, therefore, as a kingdom in this world. How sharp the contrast with much of Christian doctrine! The Greek influence with its emphasis upon the individual thrust the concept of the kingdom into the world beyond, or into the vague eschatological future. May we not recover today the ancient Hebrew belief in a kingdom of God on earth to which successive generations may give their lives in the achievement of social morality, solidarity, and idealism? At the same time the truth that is in individualism should not be repudiated. In the Christian doctrine of personal immortality there is found for the individual a sphere for continued self-expression in the world beyond the grave.

III

The subjection of Judah to Babylon, the deportation of the people and the subsequent dispersion, all conspired to change the Hebrew concept of the kingdom of Jahu materially. As Ezekiel puts it, the name of Jahu was profaned among the nations as a sequel to the horrid blow to the chosen people.²¹ Religious leaders of this difficult time were forced to an adjustment of their religious concepts in a drastic fashion. The entire picture of the suzerainty of Jahu had to be revolved, shifted from the canvas of the past to that of the future. Ezekiel and the writer in Isaiah 40 ff., had as much to do with the readjustments as any. The foundations for this shift of concept from the primitive past to the eschatological future lay, however, in the fiery passages of that first of the writing prophets, Amos.

Three aspects of the day of the Lord in Amos should be considered. First, his reference to such a concept is significant of the existence of the idea in his time. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! Wherefore would ye have the day of the Lord? It is darkness and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion and a bear met him; or went into the house and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? Even very dark and no brightness in it?"²² Judged by the evidence in the Psalter, there would be every reason for the people to describe the day of the Lord as a day of light, a day of rejoicing, with all dread threats obliterated. Such seems to have been the popular idea which Amos beclouds with his diatribes.

²¹ Ezek. 36: 20 ff; 39: 7; etc.

²² Amos 5: 18-20.

Second, the answer to any query as to why Amos should attack popular belief in the nature of the day of Jahu, lies in the nature of Jahu as revealed in the original covenant. A moral basis established the agreement by which this God took up the Hebrew people. Obviously to the prophet, the nation had gravely violated the moral requirements of the covenant. The celebration of the regal nature of Jahu must, therefore, be fraught with danger to them. The day of Jahu could be a day of joy and light only to such as were on good terms with this God. For the violators of the King's law there could be nothing but dread and terror at his presence.

Third, the eschatological note is not present in the works of Amos. For one thing there is no indication that the people whom he addressed were anything but free and dominant. When the eschatological note is sounded it is usually addressed to a people in subordination to powers malignant from which they must have deliverance. Again, Amos charges the folk to whom he speaks with being violators of the pact with Jahu. On what grounds could they be saints and the object of the deity's solicitous attentions as the eschatological interpretation would require? What Amos pictures is a deity who comes to punish his unfilial children.²³ The fact is that Amos was thinking of a memorable day of Jahu long past, when that deity reduced the forces of a chaotic world to orderly subjection. Now that the covenant people were violating the pact, they celebrated the dominance of Jahu at their peril.

It was the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews that brought the leaders of Hebrew religion face to face with the problem of national survival. They took the course of acquiescence in the doom at the hands of Jahu. Jeremiah's writings are full of this conviction.²⁴ Ezekiel began more definitely to shape a hope for the restoration of national life;²⁵ and with the writer of Isaiah 40 ff., there comes a brilliant attempt to awaken the scattered nationals to actual participation in the act of reconstruction. Without the long-standing concept of Jahu as the God of the whole world together with the item of a covenant as the basis of relationship between Him and the Hebrews, the persistence of national hopes through the catastrophe of the early sixth century is bewilderingly incredible. There was this basic tradi-

²³ Amos 2: 6 ff.; 5: 4 ff.; etc.

²⁴ Especially Jer. 9: 7-11.

²⁵ For example Ezek. 37.

tion on which to build. The defeat of the Hebrews did not spell the defeat of Jahu, it involved simply the obloquy on his name. This would be removed when he restored his people, cleansed of their sins through the fires of the dispersion. The established kingdom of Jahu, which had been wrought at the creation, had been for the Hebrews of the monarchies a tradition of the ancient past; now for their descendants of the days of the restoration it assumed new significance and became a dream of the future to be realized in its fullness, when the deity should see fit to put forth his mighty hand and draw the issue.

IV

Closely associated with the concept of the kingdom of God is the idea of Messiah. There is no need of an extended discussion of this vexed question in this connection; but a few lines may be devoted to some personal convictions on the subject. In an idea of the kingdom such as we have been advancing it is obvious that a Messiah in the usual eschatological sense could hardly have arisen before the dispersion. It is in Isaiah 45 that the first definite reference to a Messiah appears. "Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed (Messiah), to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden. . . ." ²⁶ The name of Cyrus is deleted in this passage by many an eminent authority, but the grounds set forth in support of the elimination are tenuous and arbitrary. Not even at this late date had the idea of Messiah become eschatological.

"Two anointed ones" appear in Zechariah 4: 14, but they are hardly to be entered in the category of Messiah. The one other reference which is definitely messianic in the canonical books is found in Zechariah 9: 9, 10. Here the term is "king" and not "Messiah;" but the connotation appears to be eschatological. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace to the nations; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth." ²⁷ Strangely enough the Messiah is here "lowly" rather than dominant. He strips Ephraim and Judah of warlike implements, "speaking peace to the nations" of earth. If the enactment

²⁶ Isa. 45: 1.

²⁷ Zechariah 9: 9, 10.

of this sign by Jesus prior to his death be regarded as historical, there is much to be weighed and weighed as to the meaning of this demonstration.

The other canonical passages which are said to be of messianic import, are with two possible exceptions such only by reason of a reflex from the era after the canonical books had been written. Psalm 2, for example, is a dramatic liturgy composed for use at the coronation of an Hebrew king in the days of the monarchies. Psalm 72 likewise is a coronation prayer for a similar mundane ruler. The two possible exceptions are two prayers of Isaiah. Prayers we at least deem them to be. The one voices the hope of that great soul for a worthy scion to succeed to the throne of Judah. Our English versions do not regard this as a prayer; but with no violence to the Hebrew we may translate:

May there sprout from Jesse's trunk a branch,
 From his roots a scion bud!
 May the Lord's own Spirit rest on him,
 A spirit of wisdom and insight,
 A spirit of counsel and power,
 A spirit of knowing and fearing the Lord.²⁸
 May he judge not by eyes' revelation,
 Nor by ears' report decide.
 May he judge the lowly aright,
 And fair verdict pass on earth's humble!
 Let his mouth smite the cruel as with a rod,
 And his lips slay the wicked as with a gale!
 The belt on his loins be right,
 His waist be girt with loyalty.²⁹

Still later in his disillusioning relations with the royal line in Judah, despairing of human stock, Isaiah framed another prayer in similar vein:

The folk that walk in gloom
 Shall behold a glorious light;
 Dwellers in a land pitch dark,
 Light shall break upon them!
 Thou deepenest joy,
 Thou spreadest bliss,
 Their joy before Thee
 Is like harvest joy;
 As is their glee

²⁸ Verse 3a is marginal.

²⁹ Isa. 11:1-5.

Who divide the booty!
 For the yoke of his burden,
 The rod on his back,
 His tyrant's club,
 Thou wilt break as once in Midian;
 Yea, all warrior gear in tumult
 And garments stained in blood
 Must be for the burning,
 Food for flames.
 But let a child be born us,
 A son be given us,
 That dominion may be on his shoulder.
 His titles be called:
 Marvelous counselor,
 God almighty,
 Father eternal,
 Prince of peace.
 To growth of his sway
 And to peace be no end
 On David's throne,
 O'er his kingdom,
 To establish it, and sustain
 In justice and right
 From now to eternity!
 O zeal of the Lord of hosts,
 Accomplish this!³⁰

This petition seeks a divine ruler to "sit upon the throne of David," rather than a human link in the traditional dynasty of the "seed of David." It betrays a later stage in the meditations of Isaiah upon the shortcomings of his royal figures, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh.

Here lies the seed whence there sprouted the variegated flowers of Messianism in later generations. Not until foreign tyrants had crushed the Jews into vengeful revolt did the Messianic hope come to flower, however; and its odor has no great part in the story which we have been telling with regard to the kingdom of God in the Old Testament.

A word at least may be expected here with regard to the book of Daniel. This book differs from the other canonical writings in that it is apocalyptic in nature. It is but one of many such works, and at that not the earliest, nor perhaps the most significant.³¹ Daniel portrays a future catastrophic reversal of the fortunes of God's people. The world powers which were in control at the time the book was

³⁰ Isa. 9: 1-7.

³¹ R. H. Charles, *Daniel*, p. xli.

written are in the author's mind to be overthrown, and the saints are to come into power over "a kingdom." ³² There is nothing very definite in the description of this kingdom, however, beyond the general statements that the saints of God are to be in control. Nor is there a personal Messiah in the picture as so many have maintained.

V

The substance of our whole discussion may be set forth in a few final lines. The kingdom of Jahu was an element in Hebrew thought from the earliest times. The scope of his sway was world-wide, since he it was who had reduced even the chaos monster to his will. This idea with no eschatological attachments held sway throughout the monarchies, and is reflected especially in the liturgies of the cultus (The Psalms). With the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B. C., and after the dispersion of the Jews, the concept began to revolve away from the walls of the past toward the vistas of the future. The kingdom of God came to be a hope. Yet the omnipotence of their God and his moral nature gave to the eschatological hope of the Jews a peculiar color as it arose in the very latest centuries of the era which we call "before Christ."

³² Dan. 7 : 22, 27.

Men tell us that religion ought to have an ethical outcome and that love to God is inseparable from love to men. They say it as if that were a new discovery. It ought to be a truism by this time. It was once the passionate message of the Hebrew prophets, and was embodied in the Christian religion as one of its axiomatic doctrines.

Any social work that deals with the causes of misery involves fighting, for the causes of misery are never only in the people who are miserable. They are chiefly in those who profit by their misery. The lower tenth of society is submerged because the upper tenth is riding on the other nine tenths and putting the heads of some under water.

—Walter Rauschenbusch in *"Unto Me."*

JESUS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

ERNEST WILLIAM PARSONS

THE title of a comparatively recent book reminds us that "Jesus came preaching." According to our literary records, and they can here be followed, this is a true statement. His first independent appearance is as the proclaimer of a message. But what is not so obvious to most readers of the Gospels is the content of that message. The record is: "Now, after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of God and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe in the gospel."¹ An unprejudiced reading of this statement will reveal immediately the fact that the central thought of the declaration of Jesus was the imminence of the kingdom of God. He is convinced that the news is "good news" and will be understood at once by those who hear it. That he is speaking of something familiar to his hearers when he uses the phrase "the kingdom of God" is evident from the fact that he makes no attempt to explain it.

I

What is in general the content of this concept which Jesus uses and which requires no explanation for his hearers? In one form or another it was present almost from the beginning of the Hebrew national consciousness. In the early days Yahweh, their God, was their king and protector as other tribal gods were the kings and protectors of their peoples. With the passing of time, and under the guidance of prophetic leaders, their conception of their God became so enobled that his superiority over other gods was apparent. While at the present time he stood in intimate and protective relationship to Israel alone a time was coming when his sovereign power would include all peoples. But the idea of national preferment persisted and the increased glory of Yahweh involved increased prestige for his chosen people. They with their righteous and powerful God would have preëminence in the world of the future. The political orders of the present world would change in that the political and divine leaders of other peoples would disappear or be subservient, but the world would remain a theocracy with advantages mediated to other groups through the chosen people.

¹ Mark 1: 14-15.

The future would be a divine sovereignty effective in a beneficent way for Israel and effective in a punitive way, and at times to some degree in a beneficent way, for others. But the advantageous position of the chosen national group is clear. Even if the moral instinct of great prophets made ethical quality, and not national membership, the condition of this blessed preëminence those ethically qualified were to be found only within the racial group. Any significant modification of this is the rare exception and is certainly not the rule.

When the apparently incredible happened and Yahweh's chosen met the disaster of the exile it seemed as if these fond hopes were utterly destroyed. Doubtless many individuals apostasized from Judaism.² But the prophets with their high ethical concept of Yahweh saved the people from the threatened national religious collapse and turned the matter so that a higher view of Yahweh's righteousness emerged. His moral character was such that he not only dared but must punish his erring people.

The contacts of the exile brought a new feature to the thought of the kingdom. The old time difference between the chosen national group and the other peoples now took on the form of a conflict of two rival kingdoms: a higher régime characterized by goodness and light and a lower characterized by evil and darkness. Against Yahweh and his chosen people, the champions of the former order, were ranged the spiritual powers of evil and their political agencies—the non-chosen peoples. The tendency of this thought, aided by the dualism which marked Persian religion, was gradually to lessen the emphasis on the political phase and to suggest the struggle of two spiritual orders. The political aspects were tenacious however, and in the hour of victory Israel, God's chosen, would receive the reward of her fidelity and the result of divine favor.

As to the present and the future the thought was as follows. For the present the righteous God permits a certain control of the affairs of men by the spiritual powers of evil. They are rebellious angels under the leadership of the archadversary of good—Satan. Since they are now in control this is known as "this present evil age." It is not to be of long duration but will be brought to a close by the activities of

² The conduct ascribed to both Jewish men and women in Jeremiah 44: 15 ff. indicates a very natural attitude. The ease with which Israelites abandoned Yahweh for other deities is seen in the prophetic vision (Ezekiel 8: 14-15) of the women bewailing Tammuz at Yahweh's own temple and in the constant protests of the prophets against idolatry.

the "Day of Yahweh," when the righteous God will, either by battle or by judicial sentence, destroy the evil ones and bring their reign to an end. This day of judgment will be preceded by upheavals in nature and in society—the result of the last desperate struggle of the evil to overcome the good. But they are doomed to failure and this age is to be succeeded by "the future glorious age," the age of the divine kingdom and sovereignty. Its center will be at Jerusalem and the ruling group under Yahweh or his messianic vice-gerent will be the Jewish nation.

This change is always considered to be in the near future; it is sudden, although to the informed there are general indications of its approach; it is supernatural, resulting either from the direct act of God or from an indirect act of God mediated through his messiah. The essential feature of the change is that a divine sovereignty, held in abeyance, then becomes actual and potent. The consequences are national aggrandisement and the supremacy of the righteous will of God.

There are phases of Jewish thought where God brings things to pass directly and reigns personally. In this case the future age is pure theocracy, a veritable kingdom of God. But again the ruling is frequently done by a chosen representative of God, consecrated to this task and called, from the practice of anointing in consecration, "the anointed," that is in Hebrew "the Messiah," or in Greek "the Christ."

Earlier thought regarding the Messiah was that he was to be the political and military head of the chosen people, a scion of the house of David, who would lead to victory and power. Sometimes this victory and power were conceived as world-wide, as in the second psalm. But as the power of the chosen people grew less through repeated deportations and as their experience with opposing powers became enlarged their thought underwent another change. When their own military might was largely unimpaired and their enemies were only the surrounding nations little if any stronger than they it was possible to dream of a national leader who would be able to lead racial Israel "conquering and to conquer." But after the elite of the people in exile, when resources were nearly depleted, when enemies have changed from small nations to successive imperial powers no earthly or human leader was mighty enough to cope with the task. The idea of Israel and the other nations as protagonists of rival kingdoms of good and evil, the agents of spiritual powers and persons behind the scenes, made the time ripe for a more exalted conception of the

Messiah. He is no mere mortal, but a heavenly angelic being waiting in heaven before the Lord of Spirits until the fulness of time. Such a conception found literary expression in the first century before the Christian era in the Similitudes of Enoch.³ In this document this heavenly being is given many titles, the most important for our purpose being that of "son of man," a phrase which had been used earlier in Daniel⁴ to represent a human being in contrast with certain beasts as symbols respectively of the kingdom of the saints and of various worldly imperial powers. Here, however, it appears to designate a personal being who is destined for messianic functions.

These two phases of messianic thought, one of a political and military leader, an earthly historical agent, and one of a transcendental personality, superhuman, persisted side by side. Neither displaced the other; the fortunes of each varied in accordance with circumstance and with the group concerned. The transcendental conception, more congenial to the idea of two mighty and opposing world empires, tended to draw to itself certain features of the earlier thought.

It must not be forgotten that what has come to be known as the social idea of the kingdom of God was not present in the background of Hebrew and Jewish ideas which Jesus inherited. It is true that social change was expected but not by means of ethical social betterment. Even if the dreamed-of kingdom of God was ethically better than the present order, and it was so considered to be, the change was the result not of gradual improvement in social justice, but of the direct activity of God or his Messiah who would destroy evil people and powers by war or judgment and give the remnant, pitifully small by comparison, the place of preëminent power and advantage. But hope for those outside the pale of this group was gone. To be sure, there is a sort of purgatorial idea for some Israelites who have not quite merited a place in the new age, but for non-Israelites the general picture was one of hopelessness. Destruction, swift and lasting, of evil persons and a better order for the comparatively few which was brought in not by their ethical and social improvement but by the act of God. True, only those of approved ethical attitude would enjoy the

³ The Similitudes or Parables are now incorporated in the apocalyptic work known as *The Book of Enoch* where they constitute chapters 37-71. Their probable date is sometime in the first half of the last pre-Christian century. Cf. R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*. Vol. II, pp. 208-248; and also the monograph by the same writer *The Book of Enoch*.

⁴ Daniel 7:13.

blessings of the kingdom, but their ethical improvement had little or nothing to do with its coming; that took place in God's own time.

II

With this inheritance in mind we turn to discover so far as may be the views of Jesus regarding the kingdom. At the outset we are met with difficulties regarding the sources of our information regarding him. The Fourth Gospel is of little service for, with the exception of two sections, one in the third chapter and one in the eighteenth chapter, the idea of the kingdom has been changed into that of "eternal life." When one turns to the Synoptic Gospels one is faced first with the scarcity of the material. If we take the lower estimate of the duration of the public ministry of Jesus at from six months to a year we realize the inadequacy of the material when we discover that we have information concerning not more than forty or fifty days. But more serious than its scarcity is its character. Jesus himself left no written word. In the glad expectancy of an immediate coming of the kingdom which characterized his followers in the early post-resurrection days there was neither incentive nor time for recording his words and deeds. Only as the days passed and the developing movement brought its problems requiring guidance of an authoritative character were his words recalled and preserved. They passed through a period of oral transmission with all the dangers of modification which tradition undergoes. To the practical needs of the communities in their impact upon the selection and formation of tradition there were added those of the messianic interpretation of Jesus in transcendental terms by his followers and the exigencies created by the cult or worship of Jesus. These practical and interpretive and theological problems have so left their mark upon the traditions gathered in the gospels that most careful thought is required to gain an historical understanding of what lay behind the narrative. But scanty and pragmatized as the material is it is all we have and we must use it as best we may.

There can be no doubt of a connection of Jesus with the movement of John the Baptist. It is recorded by all three of the Synoptists and it would not have found place had there not been a stubborn historical occurrence underlying it. For it proved an embarrassment to later Christians. John's movement was predominantly eschatological. His message concerned itself with the immediate future which was to witness the coming of the messiah, the execution of his judicial and sav-

ing work and the inauguration of the kingdom. In phrases such as "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," "the wrath to come," "even now the axe lieth at the root of the tree," "he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire" the messianic and eschatological character of his message is clearly revealed. The imminence of the kingdom, and that kingdom as familiar to his Jewish hearers, is the central element of the message which attracted Jesus as well as many others who were "waiting for the consolation of Israel." It is true that he places an ethical requirement at the entrance to enjoyment of the kingdom's blessings and that his baptism is connected with forgiveness of sins; but, apart from baptism which came from another phase of Jewish religion, John is in line with the best of the prophets in this respect.

That Jesus attached himself to the movement is indisputable from the records. The baptism of Jesus by John can not have another meaning. It may be fairly assumed that his mind shared the central thoughts of John. Such traditions about Jesus could not have arisen in post-resurrection days save as they were compelled by known facts for every phase of the matter gave rise to difficult problems for developing Christian thought. If it be argued that the work of Jesus was independent of that of John that will be readily admitted. This independence, however, apart from its underlying cause in Jesus' sense of mission, lies largely in the direction of a greater emphasis on the kinder elements of the divine personality and in a change of life-attitude and preaching method. John was ascetic, Jesus was social. John remained aloof and people must come to him; Jesus went to the people and met them in their daily living. But the message of Jesus, according to our records, when he made his appearance as an independent herald, was essentially that of John. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the good news."⁵ "From that time began Jesus to preach and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."⁶ Matthew represents the message of Jesus as verbally identical with that of John.⁷ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. For he has set me apart . . . to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord . . . To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears."⁸ There can be no doubt that the initial message of

⁵ Mark 1:15.

⁶ Matthew 4:17.

⁷ Matthew 3:2.

⁸ Luke 4:18, 19, 21.

Jesus was eschatological and that in its central emphasis—the imminence of the kingdom—it was in accord with that of the Baptist.

But did this remain the central message of Jesus? The answer must be an affirmative one. The work of exorcism which our records inform us was a fairly constant factor in the public work of Jesus was interpreted by him in terms of the imminence of the kingdom. The matters of suffering, both physical and mental, which the thought of Jesus' time subsumed under demonic possession were considered to be the results of the hostility to God and good on the part of the spiritual empire of evil. Jewish thought peopled the air with spiritual beings under Satan, the prince of the powers of the air, who thwarted the beneficent purpose of God and instigated all manner of evil, physical and moral, for his creature, Man. As long as this age lasted it was under these demonic rulers but the inbreaking of the rule of God meant their destruction and the end of the evil which they fostered. The success of Jesus in the control and cure of certain ailments so evoked the admiration of the populace that the scribal group countered by ascribing the power of Jesus to a demonic source. In his reply Jesus states that in any case they should be glad for if his power is satanic there is civil war in the demonic empire and it will ruin itself. But if, on the other hand, his power is derived from the Spirit of God then the power of Satan is being broken by the power of God and "the kingdom of God has anticipated you."⁹ Thus Jesus interpreted his career-long work of exorcism in terms of an incipient inbreaking of the rule of God.

Another statement of Jesus has rarely been given its actual meaning. A tradition preserved by Matthew¹⁰ represents Jesus as saying to his disciples whom he had sent out to proclaim the message of the imminence of the kingdom, "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." Exegetical ingenuity has busied itself with this passage with generally bizarre results. It doubtless rests upon some genuine saying of Jesus for it is not the kind of tradition that would be likely to arise later in connection with such a mission of his personal followers. As it stands it is further testimony to Jesus' expectancy of an early end of the present age and the incoming of the messianic era.

A statement of similar import is found in Mark and is copied by

⁹ Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:20.

¹⁰ Matthew 10:23.

Matthew and Luke: "Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by who shall in no wise taste of death till they see the kingdom of God come with power."¹¹ It is quite true that such a statement fits the expectant hope of the early church that the Messiah would return to usher in the kingdom during the lifetime of that generation. But there is no valid argument against such a statement having been made by Jesus in the light of many other expressions which almost indubitably represent the thought of Jesus. The form of such statements may be altered but the germinal thought may well have been used by Jesus himself.

That the thought of imminence remained with Jesus to the end is suggested by a tradition preserved best by Luke¹² in connection with the narrative of the last meal of Jesus with his disciples before his arrest. The tradition also has vestiges in Matthew and Mark¹³ and any reworking of the story in the interest of a later situation has not been able entirely to remove it. As the tradition probably stood before reworking it runs as follows: "And he said unto them, Greatly have I desired to eat this passover with you, for I say unto you that I shall not eat it until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come." The obvious meaning of these words is that there was in the mind of Jesus the expectation that the longed-for intervention of God in overturning the order of this present evil age and the establishment of the future age with its freedom from the ills of this time would take place within the next few days or the next few hours. If words are to be given their plain meaning "it" must be equated with "this passover" and both must be understood as the feast period upon which they were then entering. The common use of wine at meals in Palestine makes the statement of Jesus that he would not drink of it until the kingdom came an assertion of expectancy that the new order would be here before there was need to quench his thirst. Of course to those who feel that this passage must be interpreted in the light of his subsequent death it must mean that he will eat the passover and drink wine when he returns to inaugurate the kingdom. Are we ready to think of the kingdom in

¹¹ Mark 9:1; Matthew 16:28; Luke 9:27.

¹² Luke 22:14-18.

¹³ Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25.

terms of the Jewish passover and the drinking of wine? The general or conventional thought of the kingdom of God which Jesus inaugurates is that of a spiritual existence. It is convenient support to quote on occasion, "In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are as the angels in heaven." That is not easy to reconcile with the eating of the passover and the drinking of wine.

It is interesting to note that while Mark and Matthew have as their dominant tradition in this connection the story of the founding of the eucharist they have not escaped this element of the expectancy of Jesus. Mark follows his account of the establishment of the supper with a statement the strangeness of which will be seen if quoted in connection with the preceding verse. That verse is, "And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many." Then follows, "Verily I say unto you, I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."¹⁴ With a few unimportant differences Matthew tells the same story.¹⁵

It seems impossible to account for the rise of such a statement from Jesus on any other grounds than that he must have uttered words that had this import. Their surprising quality would impress them upon the minds of his hearers while their disagreement with the course of events would not be recognized because of the service which they would render in the cause of expectancy regarding the imminence of his return and the coming of the kingdom.

Thus our records reveal that Jesus' view of the time of the end of this age and the inbreaking of the reign of God in the new age was that it was at the door. In this he shared the thought of his compatriots for every apocalyptist among the Jews considered the end to be near. There could be no hope and no comfort in any view that included long delay.

It is extremely difficult to adduce specific evidence as to Jesus' thought of the manner in which the kingdom was to come. The tradition in the process of its oral and early written days has taken on not a little color from situations which were not existent at the time of Jesus' earthly career. In general it may be said that its coming was to be sudden and that there was no trace in his preaching of a long continued development which would prepare for or gradually shade

¹⁴ Mark 14: 24-25.

¹⁵ Matthew 26: 28-29.

into the desired arrangement.¹⁶ This follows from the idea of imminence and the general attitude of urgency. The Jewish apocalyptic background which Jesus inherited had as a central hope a sudden in-breaking of the kingdom. It was true that the end of this age was to be marked by calamities which were the result of the last mad attack of the powers hostile to God but these were not to be long drawn out and the element of suddenness remained.

It is difficult to say with any assurance how much or how little of the eschatological discourse of the Synoptic Gospels¹⁷ actually represents Jesus. Some phases manifestly reflect later interests and intentions. But certain injunctions such as "Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch!"¹⁸ may well be based upon exhortations of Jesus. Other expressions of similar import are: "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not."¹⁹ "Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour."²⁰ "Be ye also ready, for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh."²¹ The analogy of the coming of the Son of Man with the days of Noah²² also gives the idea of unexpected suddenness. It is true that in their present form some of these passages suggest later influences but there is certainly no innate probability that they did not come, at least in germ, from some word of Jesus. If he had definitely set forth his idea of the kingdom as an order coming gradually by ethical and social amelioration and had said nothing whatever about its sudden in-breaking it is not easy to see how so diverse a view could have been ascribed to him or could have been held, as it was, by his followers.

A curious oversight of certain elements of Jesus' thought is made by many when they assume that Jesus interpreted the blessings of the kingdom as being universal in the sense that they were shared by

¹⁶ The parables of the mustard seed and of the leaven are better interpreted in their original significance as indicating the certainty of the kingdom rather than its long development.

¹⁷ Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21.

¹⁸ Mark 13: 35-37.

¹⁹ Matthew 24: 50; Luke 12: 46.

²⁰ Matthew 25: 13.

²¹ Matthew 24: 44; Luke 12: 40.

²² Matthew 24: 37 ff.; Luke 17: 26 ff.

Jew and Gentile alike. It can not be denied that his ministry was confined to Palestine and to the Aramaic speaking portion of that country, that is, to the Jews. What might have happened if his public career had extended to as many years as it did to months is hard to say. The vital and ethical elements of Jesus' thought and life might have driven him out to offer entrance into the kingdom to members of other races. But so far as we have record he did not. The story of the Syrophoenician woman does not essentially modify this statement. Even in the form in which we have it it is the "children's bread" and non-Israelites are "dogs." Reference may be made to the limitation of the mission of those sent out by Jesus to Israelites: "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."²³ The preservation and use of these traditions is probably due to exigencies of the early mission of Jesus' followers when some would still restrict the good news to Israelites. If one holds that Jesus gave expression by word and deed to a view that the kingdom was universal one has to assume the task of explaining the long bitter struggle of the nascent movement with the question of the Gentile mission. In this matter we find no appeal to Jesus until the Fourth Gospel when the question of admission of the Gentiles is settled by Jesus himself who finds in their coming the crown of his revelatory work. But the primitive church does not seem to have known of this. Nor does it seem to have known of the words ascribed to Jesus in the closing verses of Matthew. Rather it had to work out its salvation of the larger mission "with fear and trembling." Thus so far as our records are concerned the message of Jesus regarding the kingdom was confined to the people of his own race.

III

We turn now to another important question. It is that of the personal relation of Jesus to the coming of the kingdom. Christianity through the centuries has followed his early devotees so constantly in interpreting Jesus as the Messiah of Hebrew and Jewish expectation that for the majority of people the question does not arise. The general answer is: "Without doubt Jesus was the Messiah of Jewish expectation." If pressed for closer definition the matter quickly becomes embarrassing. There can be no doubt that, upon the basis of their faith in his resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of God,

²³ Matthew 10: 5-6.

the early Christians interpreted Jesus in terms of the transcendental messianic hope of the Jews. The documents of the New Testament are uniform in this with the exception of the Fourth Gospel which interprets him as Messiah in the quite different terms of the revealing Logos. In that Gospel he is openly recognized as the Messiah from the beginning by his disciples and early makes the claim for himself.²⁴ But it is otherwise in the Synoptic Gospels. There with the exception of the demons no one suspects that he is Messiah until the Galilean ministry draws to a close. At Caesarea Philippi the disciples are represented as saying that no person had so classified him. A prophet or even a forerunner of the Messiah he might be but not the Messiah.²⁵ The impulsive statement of Peter that Jesus is the Messiah is hailed as epoch-marking. There are not lacking indications as to the interpretations which the disciples put upon this term. He was in their thought to be a revolutionary leader who should overthrow the enemies of Israel and rule at Jerusalem.²⁶ Their hopes ran high on that last journey to that city. But the arrest and death of their leader shattered those hopes. It is certain that Jesus, although he was crucified as a messianic revolutionary, made no pretensions to military leadership. The nearest approach to revolutionary violence is in the story of the cleansing of the temple, and that is better explained in another way.

It is quite true that the Synoptic Gospels represent Jesus as assuming from the beginning of his public career that he was the messianic agent in bringing in the kingdom. The assumption of the appellation "son" in connection with an indubitable baptism experience that came to him while connected with John's movement is interpreted as equivalent to the declaration of messianic office and function. If, however, he were not a political messiah the only other type familiar to Jewish thinking was that of an angelic being who should come from heaven to do messianic work. Such a one had been referred to in an extant apocalyptic document as "that Son of Man." This is a title which gospel tradition applies to Jesus and he is even represented as using it of himself. Into the meaning of this strange title²⁷ it is not possible

²⁴ Cf. John 1: 41, 45, 49; 4: 26.

²⁵ Cf. Matthew 16: 13-20; Mark 8: 27-30; Luke 9: 18-21.

²⁶ Cf. Mark 10: 37; Matthew 20: 21.

²⁷ For discussions of the phrase "Son of Man" cf. S. R. Driver, *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iv, pp. 579-589; Shirley Jackson Case, *Jesus, a New Biography*, pp. 362ff.; Nathaniel Schmidt, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. xlv pp. 326ff.; Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I, vol. i, pp. 368-384.

to go in this article. It is obvious that, if its messianic connotation was that of an angelic being in heaven waiting to be sent to do his work, Jesus could scarcely have applied the phrase to himself as a messianic being here on earth with any hope of being understood by his hearers. One moves with cautious tread in this field but the probabilities seem to lie in this direction. Jesus, thinking of the inbreaking kingdom of God, spoke of a messianic Son of Man whose early advent was expected. In this light we may interpret the historical core of such passages as "There are some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."²⁸ A passage of similar significance is "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come."²⁹ In spite of manifest use for a later situation these statements may well rest upon the germ of a tradition from Jesus.

After the rise of the faith that Jesus was no longer in the abode of the dead, but was with God, the messianic faith of the disciples, which had been sorely wounded by the events of the passion, revived, but in a different form. The statements of their Master regarding the Messiah were applied to him. He himself was the Son of Man. Soon he would return from heaven and would do those punitive and redemptive deeds which were expected of the Messiah. Their later faith is reflected in the gospel tradition where Jesus is represented as consciously the Messiah.

The difficulties in the way of so interpreting the earthly Jesus are many and some of them are apparent. That Jesus had an overwhelming sense of a divinely given mission is clear. This mission was connected with preparing men for the kingdom of God. But that Jesus considered himself during his earthly career to be the messianic vicegerent of God as understood by his contemporaries rather than a herald of the good news that the reign of God was about to begin is a position not altogether easy to maintain.

IV

There is, however, another part of the message of Jesus to which we have as yet paid no attention. It is the first word of the initial message ascribed to him, "Repent!" As a sanction to that call Jesus used the nearness of the kingdom. His message really runs: "The

²⁸ Matthew 16: 28; Mark 9: 1; Luke 9: 27.

²⁹ Matthew 10: 23.

kingdom of God is imminent, therefore repent!" It is in the insights and the ramifications of that single imperative that much of the permanent value of the life and thought of Jesus are to be found. It is a close inference that Jesus puts this matter of repentance as an indispensable condition of participation in the kingdom, or the blessed future age when God should reign indeed. The finding of the content of this word as Jesus understood it would take us through the greater part of his teaching; in fact, through all that teaching which is sometimes called the "ethical" and sometimes the "social" teaching of Jesus.

One of the briefest and at the same time one of the most comprehensive statements on the relation of repentance and the kingdom is found in a statement ascribed to him by Matthew. "I say unto you that except your righteousness (i. e. your character and conduct) be of a higher quality than that of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."³⁰ Repentance has to do with conduct and ultimately with character. It is the choice of the right as that emerges from the total situation. To choose, by act of will, what one sees to be the best, that is what one sees to be the will of God, is the positive side of repentance. Its negative side is the abandonment of the old ideals and standards and of satisfaction with the achievement of them. Unfortunately the word has been confused with "penitence" and "penance" until the essential part of the concept has eluded many. Penitence and penance are most frequently emotionally motivated; the essence of repentance, as Jesus flung forth his challenge, is volitional. It comes close to the words of a Hebrew prophet: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek justice. . . . If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the fruit of the land."³¹

Before the portal of participation in the age that is to be stands this ethico-spiritual requirement. And for Jesus it always stood there. Rigid and narrowly patriotic nationalists might urge Abrahamic descent and covenantal preference, but Jesus based sharing in the new order upon a moral attitude. He is here in line with the best and highest in the writing prophets of pre-exilic and exilic times. He is at one with John the Baptist on this matter. It is the nearest approach

³⁰ Matthew 5:20.

³¹ Isaiah 1:16, 17, 19.

we have in the teaching of Jesus as to the things that are to characterize the members of the new order and thus the order itself. In the double petition of the model prayer the matter is put, "May thy kingdom come, and may thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The first part was the act of God himself or of his Anointed, the second part can be realized in full when by divine judgment all evil powers would be destroyed or would be under divine control. Those who in the days of the imminence of the new order had ethically prepared themselves would find themselves in an environment which made moral triumph possible, but their moral preparation and their degree of triumph had nothing to do with the coming of the kingdom itself. It was no social order brought about by gradual betterment although in the new order right and justice would prevail.

With the imminent coming of the kingdom Jesus had little to do save to proclaim it. To be sure, everything that tended to break the power of evil was an aid to the destruction of this age and in that way God might use an agent in healings and exorcisms. But its coming was in the power and time of God. With the challenge to men to ethical and spiritual preparation for its enjoyment he had much to do. In fact, this phase of his work seems to have engrossed him so greatly that it tends to fill his horizon. So anxious is he that people shall be ready to enjoy that which God will prepare that he throws the emphasis strongly upon that side of his message and task. But the ethic to which he urges men is no mere "ethic for the interim." Preparatory in its function it is to have its perfect work in the kingdom.

Like the flashing facets of a diamond the various phases of the teaching of Jesus reflect the white light of his moral idealism and spiritual insight. The fundamental emphases of his thought are few and profound. But their ramifications and applications are wide and many. In relation to self, there must be perfect integrity. Profession and life must accord. A man's word must be as good as his bond. No casuistry, but simple truthfulness must mark the man who has repented. The withering word "hypocrite" is relevant here. The stern condemnation of such intrinsically noble practices as prayer and almsgiving when ostentatiously performed has its basis in the fundamental character of the attitude of personal integrity. The criticism of Pharisaism for its emphasis upon meticulous externals while the inner motives are unworthy and the inner attitude untrue springs from the same thought.

Toward others, there must be utter good will. Duties and services that cost must outrun any selfish insistence on "rights." Unneighborly discriminations and the nurturing of thoughts of hatred and revenge are hereby excluded. The frequent and apparently extreme emphasis upon forgiveness is to be explained by the constant demand of this attitude toward others. There is to be benevolence even toward enemies and in the attainment of this moral standard likeness to God himself is promised. For this is the meaning of the words: "I say unto you, Love your enemies, . . . in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."³² And divine sonship here must be understood in terms of moral likeness; in this case a benevolent attitude toward those who might be expected to receive our hostility.

Toward God, there is to be simple trust and utter devotion. He knows the needs of his children, his wisdom and love may be trusted. In hyperbolic figures Jesus calls for the abandonment of anxiety and for a childlike dependence upon God. He is worthy of such trust for he is constantly interested in our welfare and is ever alert to receive a wayward one who voluntarily takes the first step to him. To those who seek his righteousness, that is, character and conduct approved by him, all other things shall be added. It is interesting to note how closely this is in accord with Jesus' own action in abandoning his means of livelihood and devoting himself entirely to the fulfilment of the mission which he was confident had come to him from God.

He abides for us as one who saw deeply into the moral nature of God and who revealed his vision with unequalled clearness. He is, to borrow a concept from the Fourth Gospel, the supreme interpreter of the loving nature of God. He stands an unchallenged leader in setting forth those attitudes of life which God approves, which lead to spiritual victory, and which, applied in human relations, would bring about a social order which might in modern thought be termed with not a little propriety "a kingdom of God."

Of the value of this moral and spiritual idealism of Jesus there can be no doubt. Wherever men have moved in its direction there has been a finer quality of living which has reacted in social relationships. But to search in the expressed thought of Jesus for a program of social betterment and redemption as it is understood to-day is to seek something that is not here. The doctrine of the two ages, inseparable from later Jewish views of the eschatological framework, effectually

³² Matthew 5: 43-45.

prevented that. That his moral ideals and attitudes may have social application is also beyond doubt. In fact, wherever they have been socially applied by individuals or groups there has inevitably been social betterment. But social ideals and programs, no matter how excellent, must seek their authority in their intrinsic worth. As they are understood today historical interpretation of Jesus can not find them in his words. The ultimate authority of his moral standards and challenges lies in their self-validating quality. They appeal to the conscience and the reason in the best aspects of those faculties. In other words they are true not simply because Jesus set them forth; with greater accuracy one might say that Jesus valued them and staked his life on them because they were true. They validated themselves.

It is this that leads a recent writer to say with insight:

"The new appreciation of Jesus is concerned with his personal religious living, in so far as that is recoverable from the pages of history. . . . Instead of seeking in him a revelation of eternally valid moral and spiritual norms to be everywhere and always obeyed, we tread with him the pathway of struggle toward the realization of worthy religious attainments in the immediate contacts of life—and we never see him resting on past accomplishments, as though he had already attained to the ultimate goal. . . .

"A rich inheritance awaits our quest. We have placed ourselves under the influence of a person whose ideals, efforts, and attainments now become available for us in the constructive religious tasks of the twentieth century. It is very true that vital present-day religion must be of our own making, a product of our most sincere efforts in response to the interests and needs of our personal and social experiences. We are not at liberty to substitute the religion which Jesus lived and taught in ancient Palestine for the religion that we must live and teach in our world. But if we have profited as we may from our association with him, the experiences thus acquired cannot fail to increase immensely our equipment for efficient religious activities today. Henceforth we are without excuse if we are lacking in spiritual sensitivity, if we underrate the importance of cherishing noble ideals, if we neglect to revere the sanctity of a pure conscience, if we are half-hearted in our response to the call of duty, if we are narrow in our sympathies and unsocial in our attitudes, if we are tardy or hesitant in our loyalty to the cause of righteousness, or if ever we yield to the seductive impulse to court medioc-

richness in moral and spiritual affairs. The degree to which we cherish and magnify in real life these elemental virtues is the true measure of our appreciation of Jesus."⁸³

The heritage of Jesus which is ours from that part of his message of the kingdom contained in the word "repent" is richer than that of any set program. It is capable of infinite effort to attain and of infinite adaptation and application both to individual and social situations because it is concerned with the qualities and attitudes of life in living situations. And in fellowship with it and application of it men to whom the will of God is more than an empty phrase will find life and living move "from glory unto glory."

⁸³ Shirley Jackson Case, *Jesus Through the Centuries*, pp. 374-376.

For ages the cross of Christ has stood at the center of Christian theology. But many good men who are loud in their insistence on the cross as the only means of salvation have apparently never had any experience of the pain of the cross. . . . They never antagonized profitable sin; so they never got hurt. But in that case their religion is not as specifically Christian as they think it is.

Religion has the master word in human life. When patriotism, poetry, science, or philosophy rises to its highest level, it becomes religious. In the great moments of life, either in joy or sorrow, nothing suffices except religion. If the Titanic had sunk while the band was playing anything but a religious song, it would have been felt as a dissonance.

Other things being equal, a man of religious faith and temper is always the wiser and stronger. The religious souls are the master souls.

—Walter Rauschenbusch in "Unto Me."

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

CONRAD HENRY MOEHLMAN

IN the course of the centuries, words roam far afield from their original significance. Semasiology is often more meaningful than etymology. Ideas have a habit of undergoing similar transformations. The term *Kingdom of God* is a good illustration of this law of variation from primary meaning. It has signified different things in Israel and Judaism, while in Christianity its meanings have been legion. And the modern debate regarding the *Kingdom of God* concept is often utterly forgetful of this fact. It seems to assume that *Kingdom of God* has always and everywhere had the same connotation. This study will examine some of the emphases attaching to the idea in the hope that present day Christianity may not lose the battle while fighting for a banner.

I

In the *gospel*, the term kingdom of God is of frequent occurrence; in the *apostolos*, it tends to disappear. Despite its feverish apocalypticism, the Johannine apocalypse employs the kingdom of God terminology only infrequently.¹ This also holds for the Acts of the Apostles.²

For the first generation of Christians, Kingdom of God denoted the supernatural and imminent perfect order of things which God without assistance from man would miraculously establish upon this earth or elsewhere. Man must patiently await the impending catastrophe when the heavens and the earth would be shaken, the dead raised, the devil and his cohorts annihilated at Armageddon and the Kingdom of God set up in place of the reign of evil.

The technical term for the day of the Lord, for the epiphany of Christ, for the coming of the Son of Man upon the clouds of the sky to hold the final assize and inaugurate the overworldly reign of God was *parousia*. This term which summarizes the earliest faith of the church is not found in the Greek translation of the Old Testament and signifies not second coming but the Messianic arrival of the Lord to bring to an end the present scheme of things.³

¹ Revelation of John 1: 9, 11: 15, 12: 10.

² Acts 1: 3, 6; 14: 22.

³ "Second coming" is a development of the late second century. The surrender of the hope of the Kingdom of God to the expectation of the day of the Lord may be observed in the Apostles' Creed: "ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, from whence he cometh to judge the quick and dead."

Primitive Christians were not in any sense concerned with the reconstruction of the present order of things. They believed unanimously in a Kingdom of God originating in heaven and coming down out of heaven. This was the faith of Jerusalem Christians as any fair interpretation of Mark 13 demonstrates.

The correspondence of the pioneer missionary to the Gentiles covers a span of fifteen years. In both his earlier and later letters, Paul very emphatically proclaims a sway of God and Christ originating in principle with the victory of Calvary but to be completed by the miraculous descent of Christ from the throne of God.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall arise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord."⁴

"Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him. . . . And then shall be revealed the lawless one whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his presence."⁵

"We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed."⁶

Even such a social tract as the Epistle of James regards the world as rapidly nearing the denouement: "in the last days," "the arrival of the Lord is at hand."⁷

In the First Epistle of Peter the point is made over and over again that the Kingdom of God has no concern with this earth or human society.

"Blessed be God . . . who begat us again . . . unto an inheritance . . . reserved in heaven."

"Grace is being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"Manifested at the end of the times for your sake."

⁴ I Thess. 4: 15-17.

⁵ II Thess. 2: 1, 8.

⁶ I Cor. 15: 51f.

⁷ James 5: 3, 8f.

"Who is on the right hand of God having gone into heaven."

"Who shall give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

"But the end of all things is at hand."

"That at the revelation of his glory ye may rejoice."⁸

So convinced was the author of Acts that the end of the world was in sight that he took the liberty of adding the words "in the last days" to a quotation from Joel.⁹

According to I and II Timothy, the Lord would soon appear. This epiphany denoted the end of the present age and the commencement of the heavenly reign.¹⁰

If still unconvinced that the Kingdom of God for early Christians involved the establishment of a supernatural world order and not the reconstruction of the existing social order, study such passages as the following in the Revelation of John.

"The time is at hand."

"And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan and bound him for a thousand years."

"And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and I saw the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down new out of heaven from God . . . Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them . . . and be their God and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more . . . the first things are passed away."¹¹

II

Primitive Christians assumed the immediacy of the impending cataclysm. While they were yet living, the celestial kingdom of God would descend from heaven.

In addition to Paul's assertions in I Thessalonians 2:1, I Corinthians 15:51f. and the "I come quickly" of the Johannine apocalypse,¹² consider the expectation of Jerusalem Christians as expressed in the following verses:

⁸ I Peter 1:4f, 13, 20; 3:22; 4:5, 7, 13.

⁹ Acts 2:17.

¹⁰ I Timothy 6:14, 17; II Timothy 1:18.

¹¹ Revelation of John 1:3; 20:1, 7; 21:1ff.

¹² Ibid. 3:11, 22:12.

"Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man come."

"Verily, I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished."¹³

III

The gospel narrative lets communication between the risen Jesus and the disciples cease a few weeks after the return from the tomb, Jesus was taken up into heaven even as his disciples steadfastly looked upon him. Thus also he would return.¹⁴

But where did the early church locate Jesus during the interval between the ascension and the descent for the final world assize? The affirmation of the Apostles' Creed—"Ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father," is well sustained by the New Testament.

"Being therefore at the right hand of God."

"That he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things."

"He who was manifested in the flesh.

Received up into glory."

"Who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven."¹⁵

Paul lived in tension between two worlds. The cross and resurrection had in principle inaugurated the sway of Christ and yet the Kingdom of God was an eschatological concept.¹⁶ Paul's mysticism enabled him at times to enter into very intimate immediate experience of the Lord—"it is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me; nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;"¹⁷ but he was also convinced that the Lord was yonder—"having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for it is far better; if we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable."¹⁸

¹³ Matthew 10: 23, 16: 28, 24: 34.

¹⁴ Acts 1: 9-11.

¹⁵ Acts 2: 33, 3: 20; I Tim. 3: 16; I Peter 3: 22.

¹⁶ Romans 1: 1ff, 14: 17; I Cor. 4: 20, 6: 9f, 15: 50 etc.

¹⁷ Gal. 2: 20; Rom. 8: 39.

¹⁸ Phil. 1: 23; I Cor. 15: 19. The passages Matthew 28: 20 and 18: 20 represent a later non-Palestinian Christian tradition. See further *C. R. Divinity School Bulletin*, vol. 72, 1ff.

IV

Was the *parousia* of the Lord to be visible? In I Corinthians 15, Paul explains at length that the body of the redeemed dead is a grace-gift of God. The psychical body disappears. The body of the blessed is "pneumatic." Immortality is not natural but conferred. The Christian becomes immortal by an act of God. Moreover, flesh and blood cannot enter into that life. Flesh and blood are suited only to the mortal life. Therefore those living at the descent of the Lord must be miraculously transformed in order to join the assembly of the saints. And yet the passages in I and II Thessalonians already quoted definitely and precisely describe a visible arrival of the Lord. Acts 1:11 lets two men in white apparel announce to the anxious disciples, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven, this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." "Behold, he cometh with the clouds," the author of the Johannine apocalypse writes, "and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him."¹⁹

V

The primitive Christian expectation of the arrival of the Lord upon the clouds of heaven proved delusive. The calendar definitely cancelled this naïve longing. The first generation of Christians passed on to the silent realm without beholding the *parousia* of the Lord. Persons who had joined the early church because they believed the end of the world nigh were caught in the net of persecution spread by the empire whose disintegration was still centuries ahead. The final judgment of the world did not occur then. Indeed, it has not occurred since. As the events of A. D. 70 and 135 destroyed the buoyant Christian enthusiasm, despondent pessimism brooded over the Christian communities. The *parousia* of the Lord was the principal content of the earliest creed of the church. What havoc had now been wrought! What rebuilding of fundamentals was necessary! The Christian church has probably never faced such a crisis as presented itself when the Lord's descent upon the clouds of the sky was shown to be delusive. Twentieth century Christians refuse to admit the plain facts regarding the New Testament teaching of the coming of Christ during that first Christian generation because they fear to subject their

¹⁹ Rev. of John 1:7.

faith to such a terrific strain. What, then, must have been the despair in primitive Christianity when this dynamic hope was destroyed by the march of events!

"But if that evil servant shall say, in his heart, My Lord tarryeth; and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants and shall eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not . . ." ²⁰

"Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." ²¹

"Where," ask the doubters of II Epistle of Peter, "is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation . . ." ²²

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness but is long suffering . . . the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." ²²

VI

The value of the magnificent obsession of primitive Christianity can hardly be overestimated. Belief in the speedy coming of Christ was a wall of fire around the early Christian community. It not only provided the joy, enthusiasm, confidence, assurance, conviction, the moral and religious earnestness, the power to endure criticism, which enabled Christianity to get under way but also prevented the adoption of a constitution which would have bound the later church to conformity to what had first been. This hope established case law rather than code law for the government of the church.

Because the first Christians expected the end of the world in their life-time, one searches the pages of the New Testament in vain for any sociological program. Primitive Christians do not deal in any radical way with slavery, marriage and the home, the state, wealth, and poverty. The institution of slavery is not criticized. Onesimus was sent back to his master Philemon. Paul's view of marriage is clearly conditioned by his expectation of the approaching end of the age.²³ Paul suggests obedience to Rome.²⁴ Later Christians must have

²⁰ Matthew 24: 48ff; Luke 12: 45.

²¹ Matthew 25: 5.

²² II Peter 3: 3ff.

²³ I Cor. 7: 31.

²⁴ Romans 13: 1.

questioned more than once whether Domitian, Decius, and Diocletian were ordained of God.

Because the early Christians failed to construct a sociological program since unnecessary during the slight interim before the intervention of God, the Roman imperial government did not become aware of the separateness of Christianity until four decades after the death of Jesus. But if the super-spies of the Roman empire constantly seeking to uncover traces of revolution and to discover secret organizations, failed to proceed against Christianity for political and economic reasons to the time of Nero and even thereafter, twentieth century investigators might just as well acknowledge first as last that the early Christian church far from engaging in any attempts to reconstruct society either by slow inoculation of good will or drastic application of a particular program was anxiously awaiting the immediate intervention of God as the solution of their troubles.

If the earliest Christians were attempting to reconstruct the Graeco-Roman civilization during the century following the death of Jesus, why was Tacitus the first Roman writer definitely to refer to the existence of the Christians? Why did not such socially-minded Christians challenge the Roman empire to suppressive measures in the days of Tiberius rather than in the days of Domitian?

If Christianity had proposed a fixed scheme of procedure, such a scheme would have become antiquated within a century and would have involved Christianity itself in its collapse. A program laid down for Palestine of the first century could not have survived the breakdown of the Graeco-Roman civilization. The law of development is permanent and therefore programs are by nature transitory. They endure only for the definite situation for which they were constructed. But it was the glowing faith in the impending end of the world which prevented Christianity from becoming a mere sociological program. Christianity was not reduced from an ideal to a program, from a faith to a pattern, from a spirit to a label because of the hope of the *parousia* of the Lord with which it began.

Jesus bequeathed to his group an attitude, a disposition, a spirit which is restless, disturbed, and dissatisfied until it redeems all life into agreement with his ethical ideal of purity, love, heroism, and humility.

VII

The miracle of primitive Christianity was that the church survived the shock of the failure of the Lord to return from the right hand of God during the life-span of the first Christian generation. The second generation of Christians lived in the presence of the ruins of the fundamental faith of Jesus, his disciples and the earliest Christians. They had to endure the mockery of the outsider and listen to the taunts of doubting brethren as they suppressed their own scepticism. The disciples had been mistaken. Had not Jesus himself also miscalculated?

Christianity did not disintegrate with the collapse of its first creed because faith in the Lord was more significant than faith in the coming of the Lord. Jesus survived because his greatest achievement was himself and not his announcement of the end of the world. Jesus of Nazareth became the converging point of the group organizing about him and therefore his gospel of the kingdom of God became a gospel concerning himself. His disciples believed in Jesus' conquest of death only because they first believed in him. They continued to believe in him, despite the failure of the prediction of the immediate end of the world. Faith in and worship of the Lord had accompanied the expectation of His descent from the sky. Early Christians believed in Jesus more than they believed in the cataclysmic termination of the history of the world. Hence the continuation of the world could not destroy the church. The framework of the faith of the early church was the impending supernatural establishment of the Kingdom of God, but the essence of that hope was the continuation of fellowship with the Lord. To put it another way the personality of Jesus rather than the hope of the Kingdom of God is the ultimate explanation of the origin and continuation of Christianity.

VIII

The survival of Christianity necessitated the re-interpretation of the Kingdom of God theology. A number of early reconstructions of the Kingdom concept appear in the later strata of the New Testament.

Thus Hebrews 12:27ff points out that change tests the abiding quality of things, removes the transient, and assures the survival of the permanent and its better appreciation.

Colossians 1:13 reads: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."

The Johannine gospel spiritualizes the Kingdom idea and promises the coming of the Comforter.

"It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I go, I will send him unto you . . . he shall guide you into all the truth. . . . In the world ye have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."²⁵

II Peter 3:8 cuts the Gordian knot by equating a day with a thousand years and a thousand years with a day. Later millenarians have also had recourse to Numbers 4:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 and thus converted the days of Daniel and Revelation into years, while the optimistic millenarians known as the Russellites let the Lord return unobserved by human eyes in 1874.

IX

This reinterpretation of the idea of the Kingdom of God has continued to the present year. The principal constructions of the Kingdom of God concept which have emerged in the course of the Christian era may be thus summarized.

Christianity began with the conviction that the Kingdom of God "lay principally in the domain of the future, and wholly in the domain of the miraculous." It was not at all a process of gradual reconstruction of existing life but rather a cataclysmic consummation of history. God would utter another fiat and the old order would pass away.

From the second century on, millenarian calendars have appeared with astounding assumptions and arrangements.

While Origen attracted by the Greek ideal of the supremacy of reason over feeling turned the kingdom of God into an ethical and individual concept, Chrysostom influenced by the Stoic interpretation of the wise man as king let the soul itself become king.

With Augustine the invisible City of God attained concreteness in the institution of the church with its clergy and ritual. Thus the saints were ruled by God and ruled with God, constituting the kingdom of God. The millennium of the Revelation of John was viewed as a period beginning with the birth of Christ. The collectivism originally associated with Jewish nationalism and then transferred to the coming aeon now found expression in the Christian church, viewed as all

²⁵ Gospel of John 14:15ff. 15:26f, 16:5ff etc.

the saints who from their labors rest plus the living soldiers of the cross organized under presbyters and bishops. As time went on, several advents of Christ were recognized: the appearance in humility, in the believer, at the death of everyone, and at the last judgment. The church was regarded as the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God means, then, the ruling of God in our hearts; it means those principles which separate us off from the kingdom of the world and devil; it means the benign sway of grace; it means the church as a divine institution whereby we may make sure of attaining the spirit of Christ and so win that ultimate kingdom of God where He reigns without end in the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.²⁶

For Bonaventura devotion to God and experience of salvation represent the highest good while Saint Francis of Assisi went about alluring humanity to live according to God and regard the gospel as a way of life.

"And those who came to adopt this life gave all they had to the poor.

"I wish all my brothers to engage in some honest work.

"The brothers shall guard against receiving the churches and dwellings which are built for us unless, as becomes the holy poverty which we have promised to observe in our rule, they always live there as pilgrims and strangers."²⁷

Mysticism quoting Luke 17: 21, identified the Kingdom of God with the inner light. Tauler emphasized that the Kingdom of God was God himself in the soul.

Luther "recognized the kingdom of God wherever faith and love were manifest in earthly callings, and he held the Church to be the Kingdom only when her activity truly proceeded from faith and love."

Reformers like Wyclif, Huss, Savonarola, Zwingli, Calvin, sought to make the counsels of the gospel and the mandates of the Old Testament the laws of the State. For them the kingdom of God was the sway of God over men obedient to the divine will, striving to give expression to the demands of God in the external forms of life.²⁸

Pietism discriminated between the church and the kingdom of God. The Enlightenment emphasized the ethical and expanded the kingdom

²⁶ *Catholic Encyclopedia* VIII, 647a, cf Father Conway, *Question Box* 89f, 380.

²⁷ Thatcher-McNeal, *Sourcebook of Medieval History*, 505f.

²⁸ Calvin, *Institutes* II 634 f 638, 641 etc. Cf. *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Ch. XVI, XIX, vff; XXIII; *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Questions 39ff espec. 68ff.

of God beyond both Judaism and Christianity. For Reinhard, the Kingdom of God signified "an ethical brotherhood established by Jesus to include all peoples." Schleiermacher introduced the idea of development, while Ritschl insisted that the purpose of the Kingdom of God was to organize humanity upon the basis of love. The Kingdom of God is redeemed humanity living according to God.

The amazing growth of international trade during the late modern age reduced the earth to a neighborhood and confronted Christianity with the task of evangelizing the non-christian world. Thus the modern missionary enterprise is but another aspect of the kingdom of God concept.

As democracy, industrialization, wealth, abject poverty, glaring inequalities, secularization of culture, and the hypothesis of organic development became characteristic of modern civilization the idea of the kingdom of God was again reinterpreted in terms of the gradual christianization of the social order. This theory of the kingdom of God accompanied the slow acceptance of the modern developmental point of view, the displacement of supernaturalism and miracle by process. In all sections of the western world Christian leaders entered the lists in behalf of the new faith. Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Harnack, Rade, Maurice, Kingsley, Henry George, Washington Gladden, Graham Taylor, Francis Peabody, Walter Rauschenbusch, Kagawa—to mention only a few—participated in this application of the Christian gospel.

That Walter Rauschenbusch appreciated the modernity of this interpretation of the kingdom of God is clear from a sentence in his much neglected essay upon *Die Geschichte der Idee des Reiches Gottes*.

"On the other hand there was at that time no possibility of a sound reformation which would progressively apply the ethical principles of Christianity to the ethical reconstruction of society."²⁹

X

This all too summary survey of the ever changing interpretation of the Kingdom of God concept within developing Christianity has yielded the following findings:

1. Christianity did not originate because of faith in the Kingdom of God but because a group of Jewish men and women became so at-

²⁹ Scrap Book I. For a more complete enumeration of Kingdom of God interpretations, see Kagawa, *The Economic Foundation of World Peace*, pp. 5-9.

tached to Jesus of Nazareth as to continue their group-fellowship in spite of Calvary and the collapse of their expectation concerning emancipation from the overlordship of Rome and the immediate ending of the world. The gospel concerning Jesus became for them of far greater significance than the gospel of Jesus. The worship of the Lord more than atoned for the disappointment in their kingdom faith.

2. History has demonstrated that the idea of the Kingdom of God with which Christianity began was delusive yet this original faith of Christianity helped make it a universal religion. Jesus did not return upon the clouds of the sky during the life-span of the first generation of Christians. But primitive Christianity by this expectation was prevented from petrifying into fixed constitution, creed, organization forever determining. Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinist, Quaker thought, all Christian organizations and creeds are based upon the same New Testament. This possibility of variety should long ago have produced the acknowledgment of strata in the New Testament. Christianity to lead must face the present and the future, as well as the past. The incurable disease of Christianity has been to walk about upon the scaffolding of primitive Christianity and get dizzy. Literalism is so stupid because it falls down and worships ancient framework when it should be recovering the purpose of the structure. If Christianity would live vigorously, it must apply faith and hope and love to the problems of today. It can do so because it need not identify the ideal with some ancient expression of the ideal.

3. No social program can be found in the New Testament. A thousand and one modern problems were not present to the authors of the books of the New Testament. The book-keeping methods of ancient Palestinian peasants and defaulting New York bankers are not similar. The hypothesis of organic development upon which all of our modern conceptions of God, man and the world are being built was utterly foreign to the men and women of the early Christian era. The ancient age and the present age are incommensurable.

Inasmuch as Jesus demanded that His followers as free beings with only an ideal and not a code to guide them settle what is right,^{29a} Christianity is today able to apply his attitude, disposition, and spirit to the new problems of the new day.

4. The idea of the Kingdom of God has appeared in many patterns but a common design is discoverable in all of them. The King-

^{29a} Luke 12:57.

dom of God has meant the creator's will over the human will, the brotherhood and brotherliness of man, the service of humanity. The Kingdom of God has ever been the pursuit of the good life.

5. The eschatological pattern of primitive Christianity is only historically important to modern Christianity. But this eschatological outlook of Jesus and early Christians caused them to be very busy with the practice of a high ethical ideal. Indeed the eschatological and the ethical have often dwelt together. Life is both—and not either—or. Jesus was not merely a prophet. He was also a rabbi. The permanence of Jesus' ethical ideal—purity, genuineness, the inside of the cup, the clean heart, freedom from hate, freedom from envy, love directed toward all, service, sacrifice, heroism, humility—is not conditioned by the fact that it was set in a peculiar eschatological frame. And Paul knows that the kingdom of God is not "eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."³⁰

Indeed Troeltsch has called our attention to the abiding values in the Christian ethic:

"Only Christian ethics insists on an idea of personality and individuality which is permanent. . . . Only personality involving identity of will and being with God can survive change.

"Only Christian ethics because of its emphasis on a divine love directed toward all provides for a cooperative commonwealth, that endures.

"Only Christian ethics can prevail before the problem of equality and inequality. . . . It accepts the inequalities of condition, capacity, etc., as due to the inscrutable will of God but seeks to overcome them.

"Christian ethics because of its assumption of the inestimable worth of the human soul and because of its emphasis on love manifests charity which is indispensable.

"Christian ethics proclaims a worthy goal for all social activity and effort . . . the kingdom of God . . . final realization of the absolute. . . . The beyond is the dynamic of the now."³¹

6. Another emphasis in the early kingdom of God concept should not escape us.³² The kingdom of God was originally future and miraculous but because it was regarded as the supreme value of life it completely conditioned and dominated the present. Toward it no one could remain indifferent or neutral. It reached down out of heaven

³⁰ Romans 14:17; cf. I Cor. 4:20; James 2:5.

³¹ C. H. Moehlman, *Story of Christianity in Outline*, p. 99.

³² Recently emphasized by Troeltsch, Tillich, Bultmann, etc.

and back from the future both challenging and urging and compelling man to make his decisions as a child of eternity. It focused the light of God upon the individual and insisted that he live in the presence of God. It taught man that every thought and every deed mattered, that God cared. It demanded radical, unconditioned obedience to the will of God. It turned life into one continuous crisis under the on-looking God. It summoned the Christian to work out his own salvation because it was God working in him both to will and to accomplish. It freed man by converting him into a captive of God.

One who interprets himself as a child of God will continue to work for the Kingdom of God with a calm and an intensity scarcely present in one who assumes that he is only a particle of cosmic dust. To look upon self and the existing social order from the point of view of eternity steadies faith and enables one to carry on. Would not such an outlook upon life regenerate our present industrial, political, social, and religious order? If this floundering world could recover the ancient conviction that life is relentlessly ethical, the New Deal might enjoy a greater measure of support. Meanwhile, a few of us will not attempt to account for "a Beethoven symphony by tracing the pedigree of the catgut in a violin."

7. Finally, modern Christianity cannot be excused for its failure to apply the ideal of its founder to the existing situation.

The primitive church because of its weakness and its hope of the immediate end of the present order did not proceed to a reconstruction of the existing social order. It may be pardoned. But modern Christianity, strong, wealthy, informed, with a different world-view, familiar with social science, if serious regarding the ideal of Jesus, must take the risk of shaping it into a program of action. Christianity must continue to pick up those exhausted and wounded by our present social machinery but it must also lead the ethical and social advance guard. Always ready to assist the state, it must never permit itself to be "made into a pliant instrument" of any government lest it become an "outward institution in which public order is of greater consequence than the spirit, form more important than matter, and obedience of higher value than truth."³³ Since Christianity is in the world and of the world but also above the world, its mission evidently always is the Christianization of the existing present social order.

³³ Adolf von Harnack, *What Is Christianity*, p. 297.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTIAN APOCALYPTICISM

DAVID JONES EVANS

I

THE apocalyptic enthusiasm which attended the birth of Christianity has continued to influence its progress down to the present time. The degree of that influence has varied with the historical vicissitudes through which the Christian religion has passed. At the present moment in some circles it is no unimportant matter to answer the question as to whether one is a "pre-millennialist" or a "post-millennialist." This particular phase of apocalypticism may have an aspect of triviality, but in one sense it discloses an essential element in the outlook of all those who interpret Christianity in terms of a magnitude whose course in history has already been foreseen and foretold. It has been so from of old. "Times" and "seasons" have lured eager questions from those disciples who have been alert to discern the possible meaning of dramatic crises and catastrophes. What one might call the "native" apocalypticism of Christianity has been increased by accessions from other sources. Thus in the second century, we find not only the ideas of the book of Revelation, but also visions and predictions from Barnabas, Baruch, Enoch, the Twelve Patriarchs, and others. Hermas, the Didache, Papias, Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus and other sources of information reveal a curious blending of the original elements with the later visionary and fantastic features of a derived apocalypticism. The Montanist sect and with it Tertullian precipitated a schism which was concerned largely with questions of millennial interpretation. For the Western Church such questions were of prime importance until the days of Augustine, witness Hippolytus and Lactantius. In the Eastern Church, the first significant revolt against apocalypticism was led by Clement and Origen of Alexandria. Origen sought to reconcile the Jewish-Christian apocalyptic point of view with what might be called the scientific or philosophic interpretation by transforming the offending apocalyptic features into tractable allegories—a method not entirely foreign to modern interpreters. The method was championed and opposed respectively by Dionysius and Nepos. So ardent was Dionysius in favor of the Alexandrine interpretation, that

he did his utmost to bring the book of Revelation into disrepute, by raising the acute question of its origin and authorship. Methodius of Lycia opposed himself to the attack, but it was a losing contest. The book of Revelation was excluded from the Eastern canon about 400 A. D., and was not readmitted for several centuries. In the East, apocalypticism retreated before the more subtle methods of Greek thought. In the West the great bishop of Hippo shifted the emphasis from a millennium yet to come to a millennium already begun in the conflict between Jesus and Satan. Thus the end of the "thousand" years was projected at least six hundred years beyond the days of Augustine. If one seeks to interpret this change of front, it is not difficult to name at least three factors responsible for the change. First, the "delay" of the Parousia. This had already begun to trouble the Christian community in the days when II Peter was written. Second, the invasion of the Greek element into the "gospel." This had begun in the days of the fourth gospel and continued as Christianity spread into realms uninfluenced by Jewish thought. Third, the change in the worldly prospects of the church itself. It had begun as a small Jewish sect, and its brief immunity from persecution was owing to the fact that Roman officials did not distinguish between Jews and Christians. With the fall of Jerusalem this was changed. Christians were no longer immune. They became the objects of repeated attacks on the part of the Empire. But they continued to increase in numbers, wealth and social significance. At last they became, religiously speaking, the dominant force in the Empire. From a small, scattered, persecuted minority sect, they had grown into a powerful, more or less compact empire-wide community. And before these factors millennialism had retreated. It does not reappear as a significant element until about the tenth century. The authority, splendor and wealth of the church visible and militant were sufficiently dominant to discourage any type of religious romanticism. But the "thousand" years were drawing toward the end, the very dominance of a wealthy and authoritative ecclesiasticism was soon to become the target of the simple and the pious. The oppressive splendor and the domineering pride of the ecclesiastics aroused the saint, the monk, and the nun. Millennialism emerged from its retreat. And now, the church itself, its pope, its top-heavy officialdom, its greed, its corrupt priesthood became in the apocalyptic mind the counterparts of what the state, the persecuting emperors and paganism had been in the first Christian centuries.

Joachim of Floris, the left wing of the Franciscans, and many of the mystical sisterhoods, such as Hildegarde, Mechtild and Gertrude, began to see visions and to prophesy of the clearly imminent end of the age. The time was set for 1260, and yet there was hope that it might be averted through the preaching of the faithful Dominicans and the repentance of the church. The "Friends of God" in and around Strassburg and Cologne were in part influenced by apocalyptic ideas as well as by mysticism. The Taborites of Bohemia were enthusiastic millennialists and communists. They appointed for themselves five cities of refuge, which they believed would be spared in the day of wrath. Into these they fled having disposed of their earthly goods and entrusted the proceeds to their religious leaders.

The radical reformers in Germany had a "left-wing" of fanatical apocalyptists led by Melchior Hoffmann and others, who convinced themselves that they were the "witnesses" predicted in Revelation 11:3. Strassburg and Münster became centers of wild religious rioting and communistic excesses. The Lutheran and the Reformed churches adopted post-millennial views as may be seen in article XVII of the Augsburg Confession and in article XI of the First Helvetic Confession. The former specifically condemns the Anabaptist view and the latter apparently does so without going into particulars. The Westminster Confession of Faith in articles XXXII and XXXIII is more specific concerning some details than either the Augsburg or the Helvetic Confessions, but the apocalyptic outlook is similar—no place is given to an interregnum of a thousand years before the final day of judgment. These Confessions represent majority opinions, and it is likely that millennialists have been a continuing minority in all the Protestant bodies. At any rate they have appeared within various communions, and, as in the case of the Pietists in Germany, have exerted a vitalizing influence upon religious life and activity. Persecutions, religious wars, and radical political changes usually call forth a variety of apocalyptic predictions. The German, Alsted, writing in 1627 during the thirty years' war predicted that the millennial reign would begin in 1694. In France during the persecution of the Huguenots Jurien selected 1689 for the same event. In England during the bitter days of Cromwell, the Fifth Monarchy men turned their backs upon every earthly potentate, enrolled in the army of King Jesus, and in demonstration of their fitness to receive him stirred up two insurrections which had to be forcefully quelled. These soldiers of the

"Lamb's Army" vowed not to "sheath their swords again until Mt. Zion becomes the joy of the whole earth." The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the emergence of many apocalyptic sects, some of them with distinct communistic elements. The Ronsdorf sect in Germany established in Elberfeld in 1726, survived in Ronsdorf until the death of the founder, Elias Eller, in 1750. This sect had adherents and contributors in England, Holland and Switzerland. It was during this same period, in A. D. 1740, that Bengel published his famous commentary on the book of Revelation. According to his calculations 1836 was to be the inaugural year of the millennial reign. "Mother" Ann Lee came to America in 1774 and began the organization of various Shaker colonies. This was to be the first step in the establishment of the fourth cycle or age, the third of which had extended from Jesus to Mother Ann Lee, which was to mark the beginning of Christ's new kingdom upon the earth. The Catholic Apostolic Church, Irvingites, and the Plymouth Brethren, Darbyites, arose in England in 1826 and 1831 respectively. Edward Irving, Henry Drummond, and their confreres who met regularly for the study of prophecy fixed upon the year 1864 as the date for Christ's return. In America, the year 1830 saw the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints by Joseph Smith and others. There are localities in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri and Utah which at diverse times and under various vicissitudes, were selected as centers for the millennial reign. In 1831, William Miller began the propaganda which later issued in the organization of the Adventists. Miller's study of the Scriptures convinced him that Christ would return in person in 1843, but on further consideration he revised the calculation to October 22, 1844. Charles T. Russell began in 1886 a series of volumes concerning the "Millennial dawn." Who has not seen the oft repeated slogan—"Millions now living will never die?" But curiously enough, he postdated the beginning of the millennium to the year 1874 and predicted the end of the present world for 1914. In addition to these sects, and dating from the first "prophetic conference" in 1878, there are individuals and groups calling themselves "Fundamentalists," who throughout the world carry on a vigorous propaganda for various types of apocalyptic belief. Without any discernible genetic connection, all of these individuals and groups, arising in different ages and in different countries, in some sense, represent the original apocalyptic faith of the first Christians.

II

The claim most frequently made by millennialists in behalf of their point of view is that of scripturalness. They mean by this that the entire course of Christianity and more especially the events which will usher in the "end of the age" have been revealed and recorded in the Bible. Many of them present an elaborate arrangement of ages and events which compel them to believe that the "Parousia" is at the door. In a little book entitled, *Jesus Is Coming*, by "W. E. B."—a volume that by all accounts has had an extensive circulation, the following ages and events are arranged in order:—1. Eden, the *aion* of innocence. 2. Antediluvian, the *aion* of freedom. 3. Postdiluvian, the *aion* of government. 4. Patriarchal, the pilgrim *aion*. 5. Mosaic, the Israelitish *aion*. 6. Christian, the *aion* of mystery. 7. Millennium, the *aion* of manifestation. Beyond this last age are the New Heavens and the New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, probably the beginning of another series of aions. This particular arrangement may not have the approval of all the pre-millennialists, and certainly not of the post-millennialists, but it is typical of all those who take pains in "rightly dividing the word of truth," as they say. And if this seems a bit simple, it is necessary only to look at the elaborate program of the millennium itself in order to be convinced that very complex appearing scriptures can be skillfully deployed into orderly simplicity. Thus, the millennium is a thousand year period of the reign of Christ with his saints upon earth, with the center of the Kingdom at Jerusalem. This is preceded by the blowing of the trumpet, which is the signal for the rising of the saints to meet the Lord in the air. There the "rapture" occurs—the rapture of the "bride" and the heavenly groom. This endures for an indefinite time. Then when the time is ripe, the Lord and his saints visibly descend to the earth to organize the kingdom. A great tribulation follows ending in the conversion of many Jews and other unbelievers. Satan is bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and the reign of the saints is perfect. Then the devil is loosed, makes a final bid for a place in the sun, and in a great battle is overthrown with all his angels and adherents, hurled into the lake of fire where he and his are doomed to everlasting torment. The final judgment follows,—the earth is renewed by fire and becomes the everlasting home of the redeemed. This is not the invariable order in which these events are to occur, and many will at

once miss the figure of the Anti-christ concerning whom the speculations are most interesting. Let it now be added that all serious apocalypticists are now and have been through Christian history convincing themselves that this program is imminent. Practically every generation has lived in the hope of participating in these events, because they have seen, each in its own time, the figures and events which the Scriptures enabled them to identify as signs of the Parousia. This is either a severe arraignment of the Scriptures, or convincing evidence that the interpreters are subject to delusions. In any fair sense, the complex programs are not found in the Bible. They are compounded by eager enthusiasts who disregard utterly the simplest rules of exegesis and ingeniously weave together fragments of diverse origin, quality and significance in order to complete a schedule which two thousand years of history has silently ridiculed. One may grant that the prevailing outlook of the New Testament is apocalyptic, without for an instant confusing one's admission of the fact with the approval of this detailed, tabular and puerile interpretation.

This attempt to find a "program" in the Bible is not limited to pre-millennialists. As noted above, the Roman Catholics adopted the views of Augustine, and the Reformation Protestants in their articles of Faith the post-millennial view. Among those who are called "liberal" are many who have come to speak of the "Social gospel" as the gospel of the "kingdom," meaning thereby that in the mind of Jesus the "kingdom of God" was a social concept, an all-inclusive, far-extending, long-lasting *process* which will culminate in that "far off, divine event toward which the whole creation moves." One defines the kingdom as "that order of human society which corresponds to the teachings of Jesus." Another has said, "Now we know that organized life, its laws and customs, institutions, thoughts, ideals of justice, art and literature, must become transformed by the Christian spirit, so that purity instead of vulgarity, wise self-control instead of beastly folly, righteousness instead of oppression, brotherly cooperation instead of competitive exploitation shall rule in mankind. The inexhaustible ethical enthusiasm of the Kingdom of God has fused with modern democracy in order to mold the social life of the people according to the will of God." To support this interpretation the parables of the leaven, the mustard seed, and of the seed growing of itself are especially emphasized, and along with them the story of the good Samaritan and such incidents as have to do with the humanitarian aspects of Christ's ministry. The ideal

thus expressed certainly commands allegiance by the very quality of its content, but it is a totally different matter to assume that it is an interpretation of the mind of Christ as read by his disciples. To read this meaning into the phrase "Realm of God" as used by Jesus, it is necessary to divorce it entirely from its historical origin, to assert that Jesus was not an apocalypticist, to deny that his disciples succeeded in understanding him in any true sense, to affirm that the primitive church was utterly mistaken as to the source of its Parousia hopes, and to transplant words that were perfectly capable of expressing the religious thought of that day into a soil more or less foreign and unfriendly. It is a case of reading into the sayings of Jesus the whole developmental concept as we have come to know it only since Darwin. Unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less truly, modern ideas of education, social amelioration, the gradual shifting of personal and institutional social patterns are read into the term Kingdom of God. To put it briefly, it is another instance of the use of the allegorical method—Origen Redivivus! Jesus was neither a millenarian nor an evolutionist. Not the former, inasmuch as his eschatology was severely simple and free of the mythology of the imagination; not the latter, inasmuch as to him the kingdom of God was a magnitude about to break in upon the world from "beyond," a magnitude of mercy and of judgment.

That apocalypticism has exerted in countless instances a remarkable influence for courage and endurance under distressing circumstances cannot be denied. In fact, distress is the mother of true apocalypticism. It is when a small group is threatened with extinction at the hand of cruel and intolerant forces that the eye of the pious is naturally raised to heaven from whence cometh salvation. To all appearances, every earthly hope is vain, and it is God who must intervene, to save his people and to overthrow their enemies. It was this despair that brought forth the book of Daniel in the unspeakable days of Antiochus Epiphanes. It was the ominous opposition of the Roman Empire that gave birth to the book of Revelation. These books are like battle cries that stir the blood and nerve the heart to endure and to die. 'Faithful unto death' was no "arm-chair" motto, but a stirring call to endure the worst with faith in a God who would deliver, if not now, then soon. The heroic faith of persecuted minorities lives in these ancient visions and revelations, and it is a total misunderstanding of their purpose to transform the ardent hopes born in the fires of persecution into speculative programs that in hours of ease engross the mind.

Apocalypticism is true to its own nature and origin only when it arises from sheer hopelessness, and dares to open the door of heaven for a glimpse of the eternal God. When this specific element is lacking, it degenerates into a religious mythology. It was so in the beginning of the Christian faith, and it has been so in Christian history. Harnack has well said that apocalypticism made common cause with the enemies of the secularized church, that it strengthened the hands of the church democracy, that it formed an alliance with the pure souls who held up to the church the ideal of apostolic poverty, that it united itself for a time even with mysticism in a common opposition to the supremacy of the church, and that it lent the strength of its convictions to the support of states and princes in their efforts to break the political power of the church. It may well be that for apocalyptists this evaluation has no merit, inasmuch as all such evaluations deal not with the essence of the faith, but merely with the by-products. Nevertheless, it cannot be overlooked that the "by-products" are directly related to the intensity of the faith. Desirable social ends were achieved indirectly.

In this connection one cannot avoid noticing the communistic tendencies which have repeatedly manifested themselves in apocalypticism. One does not easily forget words like the following: "And all that believed were together and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need." "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every one according as he had need." This is a part of the record concerning the saints at Jerusalem, and no better example can be found of the connection between a voluntary sort of communism and apocalyptic hopes. This phenomenon reappears in the Taborites of Bohemia, the Anabaptists of Germany, the Fifth Monarchy Men of Cromwell's day, the Ronsdorf sect at Elberfeld, the Shaker communities and others. It is difficult to appraise what might be called the social experiment in these cases. The sense of the imminent Parousia would naturally devalue all earthly values, and from the viewpoint of property alone the sacrifices would not seem significant. But that was not the only element involved. There was a fellowship, a participation, a sharing on the plane of common faith and hope, a mutualization of life's highest interests, a creative fusion of ideals that brought joy and release from the pettiness of individual

cares. This has always been called "fanaticism" by the soberminded, and has often been crushed rigorously by the forces of law and order, either because "fanaticism" threatened further excesses, or because the sanctity of property rights was being imperiled. At any rate, it may not be without significance that many groups, religiously motivated, have assumed that life could be lived on a basis of sharing, and have succeeded, for a time, in subordinating personal greed and individual ambition to the common good. In this principle, however, intermittently practised, or unconsciously emphasized, lay the germ of a not yet realized "great society."

For the present hour it would perhaps appear a vain quest to search for constructive values in apocalypticism. There are, however, great world situations which would seem to afford likely seed-beds for such a growth. The aftermath of the world war confuses our entire civilization. The generation that twenty years ago knew a state of comparative stability seems to have lost all sense of direction. It is safe to assume that only the unpredictable will occur. Vast aggregations of human beings have abandoned the old camp-sites for a pilgrimage to the undiscovered. It is an age of colossal experimentation. It is only natural that political and economic perplexities should be reflected in religious thinking. It is normal that orthodoxy should seek to re-discover its ancient foundations; that apocalypticism minus its mythology should animate the Barthian "Theology of Crisis;" that the hope of the Parousia should stir all its adherents to eager enthusiasm; that this same hope should be cherished in secret by thousands who have not the liberty of free expression; in short, that each type of Christian thought should radically emphasize its distinctive features. And there are indubitable values within the frame-work of apocalypticism. It affirms the reality of an unseen world, a transcendent world, apart from which our own would be a "closed finitude" with neither whence nor whither. It affirms a purposive, divine government of the world without which the dismal tale of history could be written only in pathetic dust. It affirms the supremacy and finality of righteousness in the affairs of men, which gives significance to every ethical and spiritual struggle. It makes every moment in the life of man a moment of crisis, of decision, wherein he is confronted with an uncompromising Either-Or, thus arousing him out of his fatuous faith in an easy-going process that by degrees will bring him to a complete self-realization. It affirms the supreme worth of the personality of Jesus,

and finds in him, and inferentially in human personality the pinnacle in the scale of values. All this, to be sure, is interpretation, and to an apocalypticist, but a pale precipitation of the dramatic content of his faith. In our eagerness to find the "kernel," we have too often forgotten the function of the "shell." All theologies and all creeds are shells and something of abiding worth is protected within. What that "something" is remains to be discovered by each new generation. A restudy of old material is always due, and often fruitful.

Those desiring to pursue this study further may consult the following:

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MODERN CHRISTIANITY AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

HENRY BURKE ROBINS

IT has already been abundantly shown that it was a personality and not a program which was focal in early Christianity. That personality was of such dynamic, kindling quality; his personal ethic was so searching; his religious gift was so lambent with the flame of an interpenetrating presence of God—that he became the focus of a new religion, even ere he had brought to a close his reinterpretation of the faith of his fathers. The new religion, in the course of its history, dealt with him and with his ideas as time and circumstance dictated. The religion about him largely supplanted his own religion. And yet, no idea so emphasized by him, no term so repeatedly used, as that of the “Kingdom of God” could be allowed to fall completely into abeyance. It was judged of cardinal significance; in some sense, of perpetual validity; but, like all things mundane, it was destined to undergo transformation. The history of culture, no less than of communication itself, shows that this happens to every significant human conception, and in particular to the most meaningful of our terms. Through all its vicissitudes, the term “Kingdom of God” has survived to our own day.

But, in these days, when the political patterns of monarchy have been outmoded in wide areas of our modern world, and when “the king business” is looked upon as of doubtful claim, the traditional phrase itself may well seem to lie in jeopardy. It is now seventeen years since an able and penetrating American writer proposed to substitute for “Kingdom of God” the term “Democracy of God.” Professor George A Coe himself dropped the old usage and illustrated the new. He said:

“I use the term ‘Democracy of God’ in place of ‘Kingdom of God,’ not because I desire to substitute a new social principle for that which Jesus taught, but because the idea of democracy is essential to full appreciation of his teaching. After making all needful allowances for the influence of contemporary political and religious conditions upon his modes of speech and the content of his thought—allowances that are to be determined by New Testament criticism—the fact remains that his desire for a brotherhood of man leads on with the inevitableness of fate to the ideal

of a democratic organization of human society, and that his fusion of divine with human love presents us with a divine-human democracy as a final social ideal.”¹

It is fair to say that Professor Coe's suggestion has not been widely adopted, even by those liberals who are most ardent for the social ideal which the phrase “Democracy of God” is meant to suggest. Perhaps their reluctance is accentuated by misgivings as to the part which God could play in a “democracy”—even a “Democracy of God.” Would he be merely *primus inter pares*, somewhat like the chairman of a New England town meeting? It is evident that when an old pattern comes to seem inadequate, it is not so easy to find a new one which is either fruitful or adequate. Yet the new wine in the old wine-skins forever threatens catastrophe.

I

Walter Rauschenbusch is right when he remarks that the idea of “the Kingdom” did not remain focal in Christianity. “Only some remnants of it,” he tells us, “persisted in the millennial hope and in the organic conception of the Church.”² For the most part it is a dreary theological waste across which one travels in quest of that elusive idea, as he seeks to trace its course down through Christian history to the nineteenth century. Chiliasm, to be sure, offered what promised without full warrant to provide a definite pattern; it could cite Scripture and pile text upon text. Theologians have assumed that the mind of God is visibly exposed in Scripture very much as the geological strata may crop up through the soil, and that the emphatic terms which occur there, if placed in right articulation, give you something of the framework of spiritual reality and a clue as well to the trends which will be found to disclose the Divine purpose. Such concepts, therefore, as “kingdom” and “church” have, deeply hidden within them, perhaps, a complete rationale of the history and destiny of the race. Some such conviction underlay the indefatigable attempt of the theologians to get at the deeper meaning of such terms as “kingdom” and “church”—not the meaning necessarily which they had for their first proponents, but some backlying, ultimate meaning, to be determined by the whole “analogy of Scripture” or by some profound theological logic. It was but little realized that the real mean-

¹ *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 54.

² *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 55.

ing would be either the meaning such terms carried in their native context—as when Jesus spoke of “the Kingdom of God;” or the meaning which any generation might, by common consent or as the result of reflection and extension of reference, decide to give a term which had once borne quite another connotation. Perhaps New Testament scholars *can* tell us what Jesus meant when he used the term “Kingdom of God;” if any can, it will be they and not the dogmatic theologians. But the question remains, even after one has determined to his satisfaction what Jesus meant, whether the term is apt for the designation of the social idealism which may be cherished by contemporary Christians. And that question raises, of course, every ultimate theological issue.

The chiliastic and theological coloring of the term itself has complicated the question, and its varied use throughout the history of Christianity has burdened the term with dubious associations. It may or may not be worth while to attempt a clear distinction between actual use and a justified use. Certainly there is no space for such an attempt in this connection. At the same time, we cannot do less than remind ourselves of what was dominant practice in Protestant circles until the rise of “Social Christianity.” Let one turn, for example, to Schaff’s *Theological Propaedeutic*, now some forty years old, and he will find a discussion of the Kingdom of God under “Ecclesiology.” We are all familiar with the distinction made between the “Church of Christ” and the “Kingdom of God.” Says Schaff:

“The kingdom is older and will last forever. It is a wider, deeper and more spiritual conception: the kingdom embraces heaven and earth, eternity and time, the whole moral government of God, all the spiritual forces and energies of his people, the saints of the Old and New Dispensation, the Church militant and the Church triumphant. It is chiefly, but not exclusively, manifest and embodied in the Church and operative through the Church as its organ. The Church on earth is the training-school for the kingdom of heaven.”³

Could anything be clearer or more concise? If this is the way to proceed, it would seem that we have already arrived. The analogy of Scripture supports this view, and on that ground Dr. Schaff scores the Roman Church for identifying the Kingdom with the church completely.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 456.

It was in this general region that Frederick Denison Maurice began his thinking about the Kingdom of God. He was working in the No Man's Land between the official Protestant and the Catholic (or Anglican) view of the matter. He produced his great work on *The Kingdom of Christ* in 1843, five years before the Christian Socialist movement was launched. Significantly enough, he added a sub-title: "Hints Respecting the Principles, Constitution, and Ordinances of the Catholic Church." Maurice means to claim every significant movement in history for Christ, that is, every such movement in its deeper significance, not necessarily in the terms in which it actually expressed itself. It is Maurice the theologian who is at work here. In spite of his genuine interest in social theories, and he had already begun to grapple with social theory, he is chiefly bent on magnifying the Church of Christ, and specifically the Church of England. He once wrote of his position thus:

"I have found myself in all my private meditation, as well as in preaching, drawn to speak of Christ as King, and his Church as a Kingdom."⁴

It is true that, in one section of the work, he has a good deal to say about the social theories which were being advanced—Benthamism, and Owenism, and St. Simonianism, and the backlying belief of Rousseau in human capacity, which the St. Simonians discounted, holding, as Maurice puts it, that such an ideal social order as was sought could not be established "by mere human hands." But it was the theological or cosmological conception of the Kingdom which dominated him in this work rather than the social conception. If the Kingdom idea carried social implications—and for Maurice it did—these were overshadowed by the ecclesiastical or theological conception. It is true that in his sermon on the Kingdom and in the eighth of his *Tracts on Christian Socialism*, Maurice gave the Kingdom idea specific social connotation. In the latter he formally acknowledges Christ as Head over all in heaven and on earth, and continues:

"... seeing this is so, and seeing we are sent into the world to proclaim God's kingdom and to teach men how they may become members of this kingdom, we will with all our hearts and souls help you to work out this principle which you have perceived. We will help you to do it, not in some other land, in some distant Utopia, but here on your own soil. . . ."⁵

⁴ *Life of Maurice*, II., p. 34.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 13, 14.

It is probably quite true, as Raven says of him, that it was "the 'complete drenching of his whole being in Christianity' that forced him to apply religion socially."⁶ But for him Christianity offered primarily a cosmic ground of the universal order, including man, and not merely a practical rule of life.

Among those who were associated with Maurice in the venture of Christian Socialism—men like Ludlow, actually its founder, Thomas Hughes, and Charles Kingsley—none caught the spirit of the movement's prophet, as Maurice has aptly been styled,⁷ more fully or reflected it more faithfully than Charles Kingsley. Maurice's sermon on "The Lord's Prayer," in which he asks "Is then the belief a phantasy that men are intended for brotherhood?", reminds one of the sermon later preached by Kingsley on the same theme, in which he says,

"That Kingdom of the Father . . . Jesus Christ proved by his works on earth to be a kingdom of justice and righteousness, of love and fellow-feeling. When we pray, 'Thy Kingdom come,' it is as if we said, 'Son of God, root out of this sinful earth all self-will and lawlessness, all injustice and cruelty; root out all carelessness, ignorance, and hardness of heart; root out all hatred, envy, slander; root them out of all men's hearts; out of my heart, for I have the seeds of them in me.'"⁸

It is significant that these men, particularly Maurice and Kingsley, emphasized the importance of that inner operation which religion alone is assumed to secure, that fundamental change and consolidation of personal attitude, as fundamental to any radical or adequate social change. It was this factor, this emphasis upon the essential inwardness of the Kingdom, as now and again they put it, which constituted in their judgment the unique contribution of Christianity to the solution of the social problem. Over and above that, ways and means had to be found of meeting actual crying social needs, and to this any social thinker of sufficient discernment and probity might make a contribution, whether he counted himself a Christian or not. From the point of view of later "Social Christianity," however, it is the social reference which these men gave the idea of the Kingdom of God, even although they still treated that idea primarily in its older connotation, which is of concern. Woodworth is right when he says that the Christian Socialism of Maurice had two objects:

⁶ *Christian Socialism*, 1848-1854, p. 85.

⁷ Miller and Fletcher, *The Church and Industry*, p. 9.

⁸ *Sermons for the Times*, p. 125.

"First, the opening of the doors of the Church so that the working man might once more take his place in the Kingdom of Christ, and learn that the Bible, not the latest revolutionary Chartist tract, was 'the true reformer's guide.' And then, approaching the economic problem in the new spirit of Christian brotherliness, it would be possible to rearrange industrial conditions by the gradual substitution of association for the present practice of competition; or, as Maurice would have expressed it, the readjustment of present social conditions to agreement with Bible teaching."⁹

II

It is quite impossible within the brief limits of this discussion to do more than indicate in a cursory fashion some of the steps in the development of "Social Christianity" in the period following the middle of the nineteenth century. The movement in which Maurice was the focal figure was only by misnomer styled "Socialism." Indeed, Maurice himself wished the authorities to distinguish it carefully from "Communism, Red Republicanism, or any anarchical opinion whatsoever."¹⁰ To gain any proper perspective, one must go back to the political and other reforms of the thirties, which removed the rotten boroughs, extended the franchise, liberated the slaves, and mitigated the conditions under which women and children toiled in the collieries and factories. One must follow on to the Chartist agitation, ending in rather dismal failure, before the rise of Christian socialism. One must realize that not a few were writing and thinking of the desperate conditions which confronted British labor at this time. Carlyle in his usual lurid fashion, in his *Past and Present* and his *Latter-Day Pamphlets* had dwelt upon it. Engels, the famous exponent and understudy of Marx, had produced a penetrating analysis of the English workingman's situation, which he published in 1844. Ruskin was also among the wider group who contributed to the interest in social studies. It is true that his social studies came later, but he was among those who offered instruction in the Working Men's College, established by the Christian Socialist group.

The main achievements of the Christian Socialists were in the establishment of cooperatives, and the founding of the Working Men's College. The college has continued into the present century with an unbroken record of service. The Producers' Cooperative Associa-

⁹ Woodworth, *Christian Socialism in England*, p. 47.

¹⁰ Maurice, *Life of Frederick Denison Maurice*, p. 92.

tion failed in 1854. The cooperative idea, however, did not perish, but continued and gathered momentum. It was a curious circumstance that there should have been so little cooperation between Lord Shaftesbury—"the emancipator of Industrial England"—and the "Christian Socialists." One reason, which shows how party lines were drawn within the Church, lay in the fact that Shaftesbury was an "Evangelical," while the leaders of the Christian Socialist movement were Broad Churchmen.¹¹ Even although, after 1854, there was no party calling itself "Christian Socialist," the leaders lived on, and worked on in this or that relation. Maurice was head of the College until his death in 1870, when Thomas Hughes became president. Maurice's theology was to be broadened in succeeding years and made the basis of the later Christian Social Movement, particularly as sponsored by Churchmen. To him, more than to any other, is due the fact that the Church of England at length "emerged from an attitude of indifference to one of genuine concern for the social problem."¹² This emphasis won both radical and conservative within the Church, members of both Broad and High Church parties.

In general, however, the social thought of England was dominated until well into the seventies by the individualism and laissez-faire of Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill.¹³ There was very little organized effort, even within the Church of England, for a generation after the decline of the "Christian Socialist" movement. However, in 1877, under the inspiration of Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, "The Guild of St. Matthew" was formed, explicitly to revive and carry forward the work of the "Christian Socialists." All through the period between, individual Christian Socialists were in touch with groups of workingmen, and were among the trusted advisers of the Trades Union Movement.¹⁴ They were influential in the formation of the Co-operative Union in 1870. In the Guild of St. Matthew we find a striking combination of High Church principles and radical social views. Among the aims of the Guild were those of removing the prejudices of the "secularists" of the day, and of promoting "the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation."¹⁵ In expounding the principles of the Guild, its founder referred to Jesus'

¹¹ Miller and Fletcher, *The Church and Industry*, p. 15.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹³ *C. O. P. E. C.*, xii, p. 144.

¹⁴ Woodworth, *Christian Socialism in England*, p. 52.

¹⁵ Woodworth, *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

emphasis upon the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom was not, however, as many people believe, away off in the clouds. "It is a new society and point of view of life here and now."¹⁶ With this view, Headlam and his group associated an extreme sacramentalism, an element quite foreign to Maurice. The Guild protested the possession and control of "the three instruments for the support of human life—Education, Capital, and Land" by the few; but directed its main criticism against the monopoly of the Land by the few, the remedy being the Single Tax, or Land Nationalization. In the eighties there were many movements in the Church of England and the Free Churches expressive of a growing social consciousness. Dr. John Clifford established the Christian Socialist League in 1886. And in 1889 there was established, by Dr. Gore and Canon Scott Holland the Christian Social Union, which was destined in the end to absorb the following of Headlam's Guild of St. Matthew, but which was a less radical organization. The Christian Social Union membership was confined to the Church of England, and had a kindred sacramentalist tinge to that evidenced by the Guild of St. Matthew. The Union emphasizes the paramount authority of "Christian Law," by which it means, for substance, as the best summary of it, the Sermon on the Mount, which supplies an adequate ethical standard. The Christian's three great obligations are Brotherhood, Justice, Trust in God. Scott Holland pointed out four attitudes which Christians in various connections and periods of Christian history have assumed toward economic issues: the ascetic attitude which bids the Christian flee all such worldly interests; the attitude of indifference which holds that religion is not concerned with such matters; the attitude of revolutionary reform, which anticipates immediate social transformation; and

"the last and most common and Christian way is to see in all human affairs, secular and sacred, the material out of which, by patient study and faithful obedience to principle, the Kingdom of God will eventually appear."¹⁷

Adderley speaks of the view in general as "a kind of Christian Fabianism." *The Commonwealth*, established in 1895, became its organ. The organization and its journal survived the rude shock of the World War, and in 1919 was merged with another body to form the Industrial Christian Fellowship. The Church Socialist League, formed

¹⁶ Woodworth, *Op. Cit.*, p. 108.

¹⁷ Martin, *Christian Social Reformers*, p. 208.

in 1906, became in 1923 the League of the Kingdom of God, an Anglo-Catholic group. Its first article insisted upon "the prophetic office of the Church and the Kingdom of God as the regulative principle of theology." The League of the Kingdom of God maintains its identity alongside the Industrial Christian Fellowship. The late G. A. Studdert Kennedy was regarded as "Prophet and Crusader" of the Fellowship.¹⁸

It would be quite impossible to list all the various organizations and movements which, in Great Britain in the last fifty years, have sought to give concrete expression to a growing Christian social idealism. In 1890 Hugu Price Hughes founded *The Methodist Times* as a Christian Socialist journal. The various churches, beginning with the Wesleyans in 1905, formed their Social Service Unions. Within a decade there were Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Primitive Methodist, Friends' and Unitarian Social Service Unions. In 1910 there began a movement which brought these into *The Interdenominational Conference of Social Service Unions*, with its summer schools and annual reports. Social Service Secretaries, Social Welfare Departments, Standing Committees on Industrial and International Relations became more or less permanent agencies of the church. Out of the Interdenominational Conference came C. O. P. E. C.¹⁹

Volume xii of the Commission Reports of the Conference on Politics, Economics and Citizenship holds that the Christian social ideal is to be sought in the New Testament. Here, however, the Commission acknowledges, a difficulty confronts us, for it is just "in the sphere of civic, economic and political concerns . . . that the teaching of Christ is least specific and detailed."²⁰ This is due to the fact that his ministry and gospel were "relative to a given historical setting." The special perspective of his teaching lay, in a word, in the "brevity of the provisional period before the crisis in the coming of the Kingdom which Jesus counted on in some form or other."²¹

"It was, then, *in a special historical perspective*, that of the inauguration in Israel of 'the Kingdom of God' as the true order of human life, that Christ's social teaching was originally given; and so it must be read, to be really understood. This explains

¹⁸ Miller and Fletcher, *The Church and Industry*, p. 40.

¹⁹ For the citations in this paragraph, see C. O. P. E. C., Vol. 12, p. 154f.

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

both Jesus' silences and the special emphasis in much that he does say." ²²

What the Commission says, in speaking of "some points of relative or temporary interest" in Jesus' teaching, is to the effect that, for example on the question of the true significance of wealth, Jesus' teaching is apt to appear paradoxical. It is allowed that, in the light of the "special historical perspective," the industrial order "has for the time practically no importance." ²³ Social duty is set in the key of "crisis and urgency," particularly in the later ministry of Jesus, we are told. Hence the Commission allows that

"While . . . all the social teaching in the Gospels, as relative to the supreme religious crisis of human history, calls for some adjustment to other and less exceptional circumstances, this particular part or stage of it" (the latter portion of Jesus' ministry) "needs special transposition into the key of normal conditions, before it is generally applicable in later phases of the one 'Kingdom of God.'" ²⁴

The Commission then goes on to say that our question today really is, "what ought to be *the normal attitude of Christianity to social relations and their progressive reform?*" It believes that if you make this distinction between the special conditions of Jesus' time and what one may call normal conditions, it will be possible to distil out of the New Testament Jesus' essential contribution. But

"Until these distinctions are fairly faced, men's reading of the New Testament, and of the Church's experience in history, is bound to lead to rather conflicting results." ²⁵

Now if the principles of interpretation which the Commission has in so far recognized were consistently applied, they would lead to more radical results than the Commission attained. For the Commission is under the constraint of a dogma concerning Jesus which is bound to find in him, by one means or other, the last word, so to say, upon so important a theme as the ideal social order. There is no call to question the spiritual discernment of Jesus, which is manifest at every turn. But there is call to question the discernment of interpreters who propose to erect his utterances, primarily relevant to

²² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18f.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

first century crisis situations, into a timeless pattern. This theological complication of the process of interpreting Jesus' view of the Kingdom appears in the further handling of this subject by the Commission. One of the timeless elements of Jesus' social teaching was, we are told, that "the Kingdom of God is at hand." Even although his own personal expectancy, if that view of it be correct, was disappointed, still the phrase applies. The Kingdom *is* at hand—"ready on God's side;" but it is morally conditioned, etc.

"This aspect of the Kingdom, that of human responsibility for its gradual appropriation at times by minor crises of 'creative evolution' . . . —is the one to which normal Christianity belongs. 'There is to be a Christian society, a People of God, a Church, which shall be the light, the salt, of human life. But this society is rather the means of realizing the Kingdom than the Kingdom itself. . . .'"²⁶

No condensation of the Commission's statement can do it justice. But no one who reads it in full can escape the emphasis which the Commission wishes to place on Jesus' thinking as supplying "pattern ideas" by which a social order which claims to be Christian "must be tested."²⁷ The Kingdom is a timeless pattern of the common good, eternal in the heavens, intimated to men in certain great spiritual generalizations by the Incarnate Word, but remaining to be built up, piece by piece, or to be gradually appreciated, appropriated and organized, by the sons of the Kingdom themselves. The primitive apocalypticism is rejected, but the full theological heritage is retained and supplies the lens through which Jesus' teaching concerning the Kingdom is to be understood. This point is emphasized for the reason that it characterizes not only Copec, but Stockholm, Jerusalem and other conferences in which the subject of the Kingdom was pertinent. The theological determinant is paramount in them all. Stockholm indeed precipitated the old controversy, whether the Kingdom of God as understood and taught by Jesus was essentially ethical or essentially eschatological.²⁸ There is a more fundamental controversy underlying the whole problem, the question, namely, whether patterns, standards, ideals, are to be taken on authority, by the backward look toward some absolute past, or whether they are to be derived only inductively. Even if one should decide that the latter

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁸ Shilitto, *Life and Work*, p. 23.

is the truth in the case, the penetrating ethical insight of Jesus might still point to the very considerations which would be most determinative in any induction from human experience and controlled experimentation with social situations which could be carried through to a conclusion.

III

Any impression that it was the British Christians alone who in the nineteenth century developed an interest in "Social Christianity" would be quite erroneous. The social interest in the nineteenth century was no Christian monopoly, much less a British Christian monopoly. These issues were "in the air," forced in part the very evolution of the industrial order itself. St. Simon in France and Carlyle in England, together with the groups associated with and influenced by them, attracted attention beyond these lands. Out of the atmosphere, so to say, came to both evangelical and Catholic groups in Germany alike the stimulus of a fresh social interest. Wichern in the evangelical and Ketteler in the Catholic church were the first heralds of this interest.²⁹ Wichern proposed a fresh alliance of the ethical resources of church and state for the production of a new Christendom, informed with the spirit of justice, truth and love, as these were manifested in Jesus Christ. From the middle of the nineteenth century, the Inner Mission, which he founded, has wrought steadily to make evangelical religion in personal and social terms an actual controlling reality within the life of the nominal (state-church) religious community. Victor Aimé Huber brought the results of his study of the Labor Movement in England and of the cooperatives to the attention of the promoters of the Inner Mission and others in 1855. In 1878 Rudolf Todt undertook to show that the New Testament and the ethics of socialism have a close affinity;³⁰ he sought to bring the imperative of the New Testament command to love one's neighbor into active expression in corporate social and business life. The Central Union for Social Reform, organized in 1877, established in 1878 a journal called "The State Socialist," and aimed in its rather elaborate program to avert revolution by inciting adequate reforms. Pastor Adolf Stöcker became the great leader in this movement; a man of profound social insight, he projected in 1878 the Christian Socialist Labor Party. The program which he

²⁹ *Die Religion in Geschichte u. Gegenwart*, I, 1581 f.

³⁰ Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 417.

and the economist Adolf Wagner worked out insisted upon compulsory trade unions, courts of arbitration, insurance, forbiddance of Sunday labor, a normal work day, protection of labor and various other social reforms. Stöcker more than any other inspired and directed the Christian socialist movement. Friedrich Naumann, in his volume *What Does Social Christianity Mean?* (1894), attempted to bring social Christianity back to a position identical with that of Jesus; evangelical spirituality must immerse itself in the waters of the social question; the consciousness of the workers and the need of the workers afford us our standpoint; we must seek unremittingly to abate mass poverty. He did much toward the political expression of this idealism, but into that story we cannot go here.³¹ The development of an interest in social Christianity in Germany in the terms expressed found its extensions in other countries of northern Europe. Stockholm gave the most definite later expression to this feeling. Following the Stockholm Conference of 1925, the International Institute Commission has carried on, through its office in Geneva, and for a time through the journal *Stockholm*.

It is with no intent to minimize the continental development that we turn, with this brief intimation of its scope, to the rise of an interest in Social Christianity in American Protestantism. We cannot hope to trace its course in any detail, but shall be obliged, after brief reference to its earlier expressions, to come to the more recent developments and exponents of this interest. It is true that one finds various expressions of both patriotic and humanitarian interest in the pronouncements of the Protestant bodies which far antedate the emergence of what is commonly known as Social Christianity. The Workingmen's Party of America, formed in 1876, became the following year the Socialist Labor Party of North America. A split in 1899 brought about the organization of the Socialist Party in 1900, at Indianapolis. Various efforts have been made in the present century to coordinate liberal forces in the country not definitely socialist. The National Party (1917) and the Non-Partisan League (1918) were earlier expressions of this attempt.³² These facts are mentioned only to intimate a certain political expression of interest in a new social order which was the foil of the more specifically Christian interest. In American

³¹ *Die Religion in Geschichte u. Gegenwart*, I, 1581 f. See also Niebergall, *Evangelischer Sozialismus* (1920).

³² Laidler, *Socialism in Thought and Action*, p. 501f.; p. 469f.

sociology it was perhaps Lester F. Ward who more than any other pointed the way to a new attitude which was in many respects the antithesis of the *laissez-faire* attitude, whose last great representative was W. G. Sumner. He believed in the capacity of man through the use of his intelligence to transform the social world. Even although Ward belonged in many respects to the past, he pointed in this respect very strongly toward a different outlook in the rising science, one which would supply increasing incentive to programs of social action in the interest of a new order. In his *History of Social Thought*, Bogardus refers to Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong, and Richard T. Ely as "the trio of writers who brought forward the social ideals of Christianity in a new, positive, and stimulating way in the closing decades of the last century."³³ Writing at the end of two decades of the present century, the same author lists as among those who in that period had carried forward the work of "rejuvenating the social meaning of Christianity," the names of Peabody, Mathews, Rauschenbusch, Batten, Ward, Atkinson, Ryan, Stelzle and Taylor; and in his further attention to the subject he elaborates his comment on Rauschenbusch and Ward, whom he evidently regards as the outstanding figures of the period in the agitation for a social interpretation of Christianity.³⁴

In the earlier group, Josiah Strong perhaps made more use than any other of the phrase "the Kingdom of God." His work published under the title *The New Era* (1893) bears the secondary title "The Coming Kingdom." The refreshing thing about Josiah Strong is that he is preoccupied with concrete situations and problems, and gives relatively small space to a theoretic elaboration of his doctrine of the Kingdom. He argues for a Kingdom of God *on earth*. "Christ," says he, "does not mean the abode of the blessed dead, but a kingdom of righteousness which he came to establish on the earth, of which he is king, and whose fundamental law is that of love."³⁵ He regards it as the chief office of the church to extend that kingdom into all the earth. The church must, accordingly, be interested "in everything on earth that touches for good or ill man's physical, mental or spiritual health and well-being. The monthly outline of studies and readings edited for some years (from 1908) by Dr. Strong and entitled *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, came right down to cases in a refreshingly

³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 451.

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 455.

³⁵ *The New Era*, p. 231.

specific fashion. By way of illustration, the first series of studies, designed for use by Churches, Sunday Schools, Church Brotherhoods, etc., dealt with Child Labor, Women in Industry, Wealth and Capital, the Organization of Labor, Housing, Civic Corruption, Public Utilities, Socialism, Immigration, Foreign Relations, the Race Question, Labor Conditions, Prison Reform, Intemperance and Marriage.³⁶ Now the interesting thing about these studies is that each one of them began with a "Scripture Basis." It is apparently assumed that some such basis is essential *for the study of each specific modern problem*. And yet to find a Scripture basis is not always easy, that is to say, anything even remotely relevant to a modern situation. Now why should this proceeding be necessary to the completely Christian character of a study which any Christian group may carry through in the spirit of love and social devotion? Indeed such a proceeding is bound to take passages out of their context and above all it is bound to create the opinion that, to be Christian, one must find a specific pattern in the Bible for what the contemporary situation seems to call upon him to do.

In the later group, among whom Rauschenbusch and Ward were singled out, we find a related procedure, even although when it comes to cases, it may be acknowledged that one cannot find specific patterns in the New Testament. We turn here for the moment to the approach of Walter Rauschenbusch. This is perhaps best illustrated by his little manual on *The Social Principles of Jesus*. The book undertakes to point out "the connection between the principles of Jesus and modern social problems."³⁷ "The Kingdom, the true social order, is the highest good and all our life should be concentrated on it."³⁸ Professor Rauschenbusch shows that:

"The people at the time of Jesus in the main held the apocalyptic conception of the Kingdom. It was to come as a divine catastrophe. . . . Jesus shared the substance of this expectation, but as a true spiritual leader he reconstructed, clarified, and elevated the hope of the masses. . . . Under his hands the Jewish imperialistic dream changed into a call for universal human fraternity. He repeatedly and emphatically explained the coming of the Kingdom in terms taken from biological growth, and his thoughts seem to have verged away from the popular catastrophic ideas toward ideas of organic development. . . . These

³⁶ *Gospel of the Kingdom*, Series No. 1, Oct., 1908 ff.

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, Introduction.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 55.

changes—if we have correctly interpreted them—represent Jesus' contribution to the history of the Kingdom ideal, and they are all in the same direction in which the modern mind has moved.”³⁹

No one who has read Dr. Rauschenbusch extensively can have failed to note the remarkable enkindling experience which evidently came to him in the contemplation of Jesus. The personality which Jesus achieved was nothing less than “a new type of humanity.”⁴⁰ He was the “Initiator of the Kingdom,” and the paradigm or pattern of every true citizen of the Kingdom.

Dr. Rauschenbusch had given himself in loyal allegiance and loving devotion to Jesus and his cause. His religious experience not only arose thus but it constantly refreshed itself at this fountain. Every worthy ideal and principle which life in its best and most fruitful modern expression may attain must somehow have been experienced and expressed in Jesus. I do not know that this is anywhere specifically stated in these terms, but it is over and over again implied in what Dr. Rauschenbusch wrote. He has done with Jesus and his teaching what every reverent disciple tends to do with his master. Nor, it would seem, have many great interpreters of Christianity escaped endowing the initial sources of their inspiration with elements which belonged chiefly to their own experience and their own time. Perhaps that is what every one of us will inevitably do in measure. We, too, shall see Jesus through the lenses which our own background and appreciations supply. It is quite possible, moreover, that were Jesus among us in the flesh today, he would be saying much of what Dr. Rauschenbusch has said on his authority.

At the same time, when one goes carefully into his procedure, it is quite clear that our beloved Professor, when he gets down to cases and discusses contemporary issues, employs a conceptual framework and visualizes a social order quite foreign to the first century, and that what he proposes is not the authoritarian imposition of social patterns derived from the long ago. What he seeks is rather that a love which found unforgettable expression in the Founder of the Christian movement and a more or less fugitive expression in the little community of the first days shall be wrought into the fabric of our modern power-driven civilization. And this simply means that we must discover, by courageous social experimentation, how to give love cor-

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 59.

⁴⁰ *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 152.

porate and controlling expression in the common life. *Love, in our modern world, calls for a new and specific technique, a technique which no religious sentiment and no social theory, however balanced and Christian it may seem, can supply.* Only controlled experimentation and straight thinking in terms of concrete current situations can meet the claim of life. The elaboration of this new technique of the common life may be as truly an expression of religious devotion as any cult system ever devised.

But it needs equally to be insisted that the new mechanism of a juster social order cannot be operated successfully apart from the kind of love and the sort of inner discipline of which Jesus through all the Christian centuries has been interpreted and revered as the exemplar and advocate. The kind of love which Christians have attributed to God and have found embodied in Jesus is indispensable. No doubt Jesus did for us the most fundamental of all possible services by the very fact that he himself lived by this rule and embodied it in his teaching, as in the Sermon on the Mount, his formulation of the First and Second Commandments, and his Parable of the Good Samaritan. But that we cannot transfer this attitude wholesale is equally evident. It is not enough to give ourselves to emotional appreciation or to verbal promulgation of love as "the law of life." The new economy is powerless without a new spirit, but the new spirit, in our complex modern world, is equally bound unless life is channeled for it by a new economy. It is for organized religion to insist upon the necessity of both.

IV

In the more recent literature in advocacy of social Christianity, one finds a mingling of the older attempt to frame everything within this pragmatized concept of the Kingdom of God with a newer tendency to employ a different phraseology. Even where no alternative is suggested and the phrase reappears, less and less use is made of it, though it would seem apparent that these writers, for the most part, have not analyzed the reasons which underlie their tacit turning away from the concept. If you were to ask any one of them categorically whether he believed in the Kingdom of God as the social goal of Christianity, he would doubtless say yes. Kirby Page, in his *Jesus or Christianity*, seems to be able to expound both Jesus and Christianity with little reference to the Kingdom of God. It is "the Family of

God,"⁴¹ with God as Father, which frames Jesus' thought. The human task is to bring that Family into actual being. He does, however, recognize that Jesus himself thought in terms of the Kingdom.⁴² We are not interested to analyze Mr. Page's procedure; it is enough to point out that, even in interpreting Jesus, he has found a major concept alternative to the Kingdom and seized upon it. In his *Which Way Religion?* Professor Harry Ward notes with approval the sense of rebuke which the "back to Jesus" tendency of the times arouses in Christians and its demand that Jesus' way of life be substituted for modern civilization.⁴³ He says indeed that "the last name in the world that men have a right to use as though it had imperial or magical power is that of the carpenter of Nazareth" and asserts that

"Whether or not we should now develop his faith and manner of life depends upon whether it has the capacity to meet the needs of the world today and tomorrow, not at all upon the fact that it was his."⁴⁴

Does it meet that pragmatic test? It does. Jesus and the prophets point "the way to the Beloved Community. They show the ethical conditions of the Great Society."⁴⁵ The entire chapter in which Ward discusses "The Ethical Value of the Religion of Jesus" makes clear the centrality of Jesus for the process of social change, as Ward views it. Yet Jesus is central not in the old authoritarian way, but in a much more dynamic sense, as the following citation indicates:

"The chief value of the religion of Jesus, now and always, is that it challenges man to develop his religion in and by changing his life. It does not ask him merely to repeat the past, not even that of Jesus, but to learn from it and then to enlarge it in the direction of more abundant living for all. . . . It does not want him to use or respect the name of Jesus on any other ground than what he represents in human life and brings to it. Obviously his ethical values need to be tested and developed by the methodology of science. But his religion does supply the qualities in which science is deficient and in a manner congenial to it."⁴⁶

In his work *Does Civilization Need Religion?* Professor Reinhold Niebuhr allows "the absolute nature of the ethics of Jesus and the per-

⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁴³ *Op. cit.*, p. 115.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

fect harmony between his religion and his ethics." ^{46a} The danger is that the church of our day will "compound the pure idealism of Jesus with the calculated practicalities of the age and attempt to give the resultant compromise the prestige of absolute authority." ⁴⁷ The Christian ideal from the outset was that of "an ethical international society," ⁴⁸ an ideal from which Christendom has fallen away. Niebuhr says that

"The modern church has dismissed the eschatological element in Jesus' teachings as the Semitic shell in which Jesus developed his conception of the kingdom of God as a social ideal; but it is more probably his way of expressing doubt that his ideal could ever be realized in history except by a miracle of God. Yet the apocalyptic element in the gospel was qualified by the idea of the kingdom to be realized by evolutionary process." ⁴⁹

Niebuhr points out that "the very reverence in which Jesus is held may operate to obscure the essential genius of his life." ⁵⁰ It is still the task of religion to "build the kingdom of God;" but a purely individualistic gospel can never bring it about. Yet if Christianity cannot redeem western society, the future must be dark indeed. The Christian community has rightly looked to Jesus.

"Its adoration of Jesus sometimes obscures the real genius of his life but cannot permanently destroy the fruitfulness of his inspiration. If there is any lack of identity between the Jesus of history and the Christ of religious experience, the Jesus of history is nevertheless more capable of giving historical reality to the necessary Christ idea than any character of history." ⁵¹

These brief citations, taken out of their context, are meant only to illustrate the mingling of old and new, a contrast which is the more striking when the full context is taken into account. But the movement, on the whole, passes beyond the uniform reference to the Kingdom pattern as summing up the Christian ideal. Niebuhr states it rather as "an ethical international society."

It is of interest that the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, while assuming "the supreme spiritual and ethical author-

^{46a} *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

ity" of Jesus,⁵² has moved away from the old phraseology which used the imagery of the Kingdom to set forth the Christian social ideal. The second main heading in the report of the Commission on the Church and Social Service speaks concerning "The Social Order and the Good Life." It is acknowledged that

"The Christian religion has many precious aids to finding and living the good life; but even the most devout Christian can make progress in the good life only by the constant use of intelligent and critical judgment."⁵³

The entire report is quite concrete, dealing with current specific problem aspects of our common life. It has extended the Christian ethic to a multitude of situations which had not emerged above the horizon in Jesus' day. In its third main section, this report sums up its conception of the Social Ideals of the Churches in some sixteen items (seventeen as given in the *Federal Council Bulletin*, Jan., 1933). In only two of these is there specific reference to "Christian principles"—in Article 1, to "the Christian principle of social well-being;" in Article 13 (or 14), to "the Christian principle of redemption." On the whole this fine statement of what the Churches should stand for is the outcome of close acquaintance not alone with a searching Christian ethic but with the urgent situations which contemporary life in an industrial society presents. Thus, while it freely professes that the authority and inspiration of these ideals are to be found "in the way of life which Jesus taught and exemplified," the entire document makes no use of the expression "the Kingdom of God." This is not at all to imply that the phrase in question was not luminous and significant for the time which gave it birth; it is rather to suggest that such phrases as are here employed—even the hackneyed one, "a Christian social order," or the much less threadbare "more abundant economic, cultural and spiritual life of humanity," or that phrase in the newer mode, "the good life"—speak more directly to the religious consciousness of our time than does the classic phraseology. The Commission rightly points out the relation of what may be called "the individual" to "the social" gospel. It says:

"While the Christian ideal thus demands the new and better social order which is made possible by the techniques of modern science, it has always a message of hope and consolation for those

⁵² *Official Handbook*, 1932, p. 45.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

who are troubled and perplexed: a gospel of joy and strength, and deliverance from temptation. The social gospel emphasizes and magnifies the individual and his personal needs." ⁵⁴

V

The importance of "the social gospel" must not be obscured by debate about a phrase, no matter how large the debate may bulk in the history of Christianity. They have ill learned the meaning of Jesus who would bind life afresh in subservience to the letter of even the classic Holy Writ. If we could have a new birth of his spiritual integrity, of his profound sense of the worth of personality, of his ethical clarity and freedom from casuistry, of his complete and unfailing devotion, and of his intimate sense of God in the immediate context of life itself, we should go forth in our generation as his true disciples, to live creatively and by a faith which is not bounded by the temporal only but which in the very nature of the case links us with the unseen and eternal. But that very faith, it seems to me, would thrust us back into the thick of life, where the multitude are conscripted by destiny to live out their days, to create and perpetuate an order of life which should guarantee to every son of the race his full birth-right as a son of the living God. What Jesus did, the love he bore, the lives he lifted, the light he kindled in human hearts, can be no substitute for what we must do in this matter. If he released in the breasts of men a new awareness of God, because he himself was so radiant with it, he still may render us that service; but we cannot throw back on him what God has given us to do. We can live for nothing less than "the good life for all." That phrase does not mean merely a fair chance at prosperity and the temporal goods which life offers; it means, and for the Christian must mean, everything for which the life of the spirit legitimately stands. It means a common life alight with purity, related in equity, aflame with the spirit of mutuality, and girt by an ample faith. It means this far more than it means culture, the arts, and leisure to do or to dream. The kind of world we now have makes such a life almost out of the question for the great majority.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

CHRISTIANITY AND OCCIDENTAL CIVILIZATION *

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ORGANIZED Christianity stands seriously challenged in the world today. The outstanding challenger is communism—a comprehensive, realistic world-view arising on materialistic grounds and attacking with vigor and confidence the major social problems of our times. The challenge is unequivocally stated: Christianity, like all other religions, is inherently incompetent to function constructively in the modern world with its overwhelming social problems. Instead of stimulating and organizing human resources against the depressing enemies of life in the economic and political spheres, it works as an opiate. The beginning of healthy action in any nation is to render it powerless to interfere.

In keeping with this indictment the communist inspired state in Russia has relegated religion to a rigidly restricted sphere of influence and has lent sanction to a campaign on behalf of anti-religion.

But if communism is the outstanding challenger of Christianity, it is not the only one. Even fascist states, desiring to consolidate themselves against internal disintegration, appear to find that organized Christianity is not in position to be of constructive help. They require of her that she desert her basic principle of religious freedom and subordinate herself to a restricted sphere or make herself a propagandic instrument of the state.

Small wonder then that Eastern peoples like Japanese, Chinese and Indians, and even Africans, who feel the distressing pressure of Western economic and political aggression, are led to wonder whether the Christian religion may not become an alien and disintegrating force, as they endeavor to rally the spiritual resources of their peoples for an adequate life expression in keeping with the historic roots of their culture. The challenge of communism strengthens all the doubts and fears regarding Christianity that arise from all other quarters. Together they place the Church in a precarious historical position, threatening to undermine her on all the fronts of the world, as a movement worthy of increasing confidence where questions of the public life are concerned.

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Young men and women entering the ministry today have nothing to gain by underestimating the strength of this challenge. However unpleasant it may be to do so, they must realize that as a matter of fact, this indictment is heavily freighted with truth. The industrial revolution, with all of its amazing scientific and technological instrumentalities, came to life and ran its initial course in countries heavily dominated by organized Christianity. Presumably, if Christianity had had the power to project its ethics into the sphere of the economic life and the political institutions working therewith, it would have invaded and controlled this sphere from the very beginning. It is now manifest that it did not do so. Moreover, when that point came in the development of our Western economic institutions, at which they began to exploit large groups of working people and to penetrate, corrupt and weaken political structure at home and abroad, Christianity was unable to grasp the significance of what was taking place and to arrest the development. The leaders stood aside and permitted the larger instrumentalities of the public life increasingly to be possessed by a spirit profoundly opposed to the spirit of Jesus. And Western civilization had to depend upon a movement arising out of materialistic grounds, for its best critical insight and rallying force against the destructive influences which soon began to work upon its life.

Not only is it true that organized Christianity has been historically too weak to penetrate and control modern economic institutions with its ideals, it has been invaded and weakened by economic institutions in opposition to its ideals. We need but refer to the early days of American history to confirm this. Here was a population which came to a strange land, inspired by the Christian religion, to seek a new freedom for itself. It had been here but a brief moment before it established a way of living with the institution of slavery. When endeavor was made to array the Christian spirit against slavery the Church was obliged to witness large sections of her parishioners and even her ministry justifying the evil institution and supporting it with quotations from the scriptures. The ethical force of the Church was broken. Her body was rent asunder into Northern and Southern divisions and the nation was obliged to settle the slavery problem not by constructive measures under the inspiration of religion but with blood.

Seventy years after the Civil War we still have the Northern and Southern churches, split asunder on the basis of fundamental differ-

ences of opinion regarding the way that human beings should be treated. Moreover, in these times when political institutions have succeeded in establishing a segregated status for exploited peoples like Negroes, the Christian institutions have themselves capitulated to the arrangement and have assumed this form for the body of Christ. So that in addition to our denominational churches, our Southern churches and Northern churches in the United States, we have our black churches and our white churches. In view of the total world situation, the existence of these divisions, indicating the capitulation of organized Christianity before the depressing forces of economic exploitation, give unfailing indication of her intellectual and moral weakness in the presence of social problems. At precisely that point in Western civilization where she has her greatest numerical and combined organizational and economic strength, she appears to have lost confidence in her power to maintain a community of the spirit transcending race, which is in the nature of the case absolutely necessary for any possible spiritual conquest of the world.

Let no man think for a moment that I am now making a plea on behalf of my race. I am speaking not as a Negro but as a Christian, deeply concerned about the future of the Christian movement in the world and, therefore, unflinchingly confronting the most pessimistic aspects of her historic position. It is fundamentally necessary for all healthy thinking that we recognize the elements of strength in the current indictment that she is inherently incompetent to work constructively in the sphere of social action.

I say these things all the more frankly because of my ultimate optimism. For, however much truth there may be in the indictment that Christianity has not been able to function constructively in relation to modern economic and political problems, I am convinced that her weakness is not inherent. She is not a defeated movement. She needs but to re-orient herself and thereby to lay hold on profound resources at her disposal.

Such a re-orientation Christianity is now in position to make. Modern historical criticism, which has appeared to many to be the destroyer of the very foundations of Christian faith, is precisely the instrument that has placed her in position to re-orient herself with far-reaching power. For historical criticism has enabled the ministry of today to disentangle the essential spirit of Christianity from the heavily encrusted envelope in which it has come down to us, in such a way as

to make a flexible and competent wedding with modern scientific and social intelligence and, therefore, for the first time in her history to be able to project her full spiritual power into the realm of the public life. Throughout the modern era, the vast majority of a devoted ministry have been obliged to interpret the Gospel, on the one hand, in the light of an externally authoritative Church and, on the other hand, in the light of an externally authoritative book. Both these external authorities have placed the ministry in a position of being expert pointers to the work of God in past history but poor declarers of His living will. Both have led her into conflict with the very modern thought with which she has need to wed. The one has overtly divided the realm of the secular from the sacred and the other has exalted so many things to the level of equal or proximate importance to ethical action and thereby so divided her forces that she has seldom, if ever, been able to muster her full spiritual power to inspire or support a great constructive movement in the sphere of economic and political life. In both directions growth in membership, economic resources, organizational force and extensity have contributed to an illusion of progress not fundamentally related to access of spiritual power.

Historical criticism has placed the modern ministry in position to be delivered from the dominance of these external and backward looking authorities, to establish the locus of authority in the realm of the spirit, and to declare with living force what is the will of God for today; namely, "Whosoever loveth, God abideth in him,"—whosoever reverences each and all other life and actively exerts himself to enhance the value thereof, God dwelleth in him as an active creative force, working in the world of today. Historical criticism has shown how the whole development of Judaism gradually led up to this central, spiritual-ethical affirmation and how in Jesus, at the culmination of the history, it became explicit in its most comprehensive and radical sense. In performing this work, while at the same time destroying the groundwork of every other external authority upon which Christianity may depend for authentication, historical criticism forces sole reliance upon reverence for individual living existence, radically applied throughout the entire extent of life, as the central focus of religious activity, receptivity and salvation. On this basis it becomes clear that there is no reason why any man should claim allegiance to Jesus of Nazareth and expect to gain anything therefrom unless he wishes to experiment radically in his own life with rever-

ence for individual living existence wherever he may find it. The abandonment of this radical reverence for any human being anywhere, to say nothing of a continuance of such an abandonment in relation to any considerable number of human beings, is to abandon the very central heart of religion and to relinquish all hope of constructive spiritual power in the world.

Christianity is now placed in position for the first time to appraise her position in the world. On this basis she knows that her strength is not in her numbers, nor in the effectiveness of her organization, nor in her economic resourcefulness, as important as these may be, but in the extent to which her individual members thoughtfully and radically embody reverence for life in individual and social action designed to enhance the value of life in the world. Christianity is able now to re-discover the social passion of her primitive days, disentangled from the eschatological envelope in which it first came to her and from other-worldly metaphysics inherited from the Graeco-Roman world. The passion for the Kingdom of God is now seen to be the passion for the concrete realization of the community of living beings in which reverence for life is at its maximum; and all reverence for life, expressing itself in individual and social spheres, is now recognized to be the work of God in history, operating with cumulative force.

Here for the first time Christianity is in position to make flexible and powerful wedding with modern thought. Having once come to see with clarity that it is her primary function in the world to embody, to enrich and to beget increasing reverence for life, Christianity is in position to seek the cooperation of modern scientific, social and technological intelligence which, on the basis of experience and reflection, determines what it is that reverence for life requires in a particular situation. These thinkers now become her allies in implementing her active good will. It now becomes clear that the essential attitude of reverence for life which is the characteristic and primary undertaking of the Church in the world, may ally itself with a succession of experimental answers as to what love should do in a particular situation. To the scientific, social and technological thinker, on the other hand, the Church may now come to stand as a living inspiration. At the point where intellectual demonstration indicates a proposed action as that which human life requires in a particular situation he may have hope that the reverence required to put the intel-

lectual technique into action may be made available from the Christian community.

Here also Christianity is in position for the first time to invade the divers realms of the secular with confidence that the overt division between the secular and the sacred must disappear and that wherever any activity is fundamentally necessary for the welfare of men, that activity and the organized realm thereof are in candidacy for the indwelling of the spirit of God.

It is now clearly seen that what she wishes to promote in the world is not a body of activities looked upon as sacred as over against the things which are conceived to be common and everyday necessities of existence, but precisely to breathe into the common and ordinary activities and the everyday relations of men the spirit of profound reverence from individual to individual. Whether the act involved be the passage of a cup of cold water, the making of a shoe, an organized operation of the State or of the industrial order, each and everyone is in candidacy for increased significance through the triumph of the spirit of reverence over whatsoever depresses life or stops short of raising it to its maximum value.

For the first time in history the religious imagination is cast not backward, nor upward, but horizontally forward on the actual concrete inter-relations of human existence to conceive of what they may be when they embody an intense and growing reverence for life, and to conceive of programs and measures by which progress from what is to what is possible may be implemented. The Church now comes to know herself not as that organization which seeks to triumph over the State but as the community of the spirit acting as persuasive soul within the State, begetting moral tension between the actual and the possible, becoming the primary inspiration under which political parties occupying their legitimate field, live and move, passing from tension to tension, issue to issue, program to program, endeavoring at each stage to evoke a higher level of reverence in action among the people and in their external relationships.

The protagonist of such a Christianity will find himself at home in any part of the world. There is no conceivable section of human life, whatever its state of development, its cultural configuration or past history, that would be alien to him. As often among his predecessors, he will find himself fascinated, no doubt, again and again, by

precisely those sections of existence which would appear to be farthest from him in their form and development.

The proponent of such a Christianity is able, therefore, to approach any given culture, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, African—not as one who comes to impart that which is alien, but as one who comes to salute those who live within that culture with reverence, and there with patience and love and intelligence, to help them build that spirit—inbred civilization which is best in keeping with the historic roots and particular configuration of that culture. Such a man would be welcome in any community on earth, and having been welcomed he will judge his success not by the extent to which he has been able to detach groups from the historical roots by which they have come to know God, and to build them into overt, declared and organized allegiance to the name of Jesus, but the extent to which he has been able to discover, to encourage and to bring into full and active consciousness whatsoever in that culture, by whatsoever name, is in keeping with the spirit of Jesus; namely, reverence for life and activity designed to enhance the value and meaning thereof. To the residents of such a place he will seem as one who binds the children unto the fathers by his selection from and emphasis upon precisely those elements of the tradition and those characteristics of their spirit which fill their daily existence with the deepest meaning and which light their imaginations with a sense of the unlimited possibilities of life before them.

Wherever such a proponent of Christianity may live—in the United States, or Africa or Asia—he will find himself in conflict with whatsoever individual and organized practices tend to repress and to cheapen human existence. I am afraid that not the least of these organized activities may sometime be the organized Church itself. He will know disappointment, suffering and often defeat. But he will be conscious of being engaged in the greatest of all adventures. And again and again he will be lifted into the highest joy as he realizes from experience that he is working with a movement which is capable of imparting one degree of blessing after another to every division of life, private and public, and over the entire range of human existence.

CONCERNING WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

THE *Rauschenbusch Number* of the Rochester Theological Seminary *Bulletin* published in November, 1918, is still the best summary of the career of Walter Rauschenbusch. It was edited by Conrad Henry Moehlman.

The three volumes of the *Scrap-Book of Walter Rauschenbusch* preserved in the Neander Room of the library of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School contain his principal articles and addresses and constitute a mine of information for such as would trace his intellectual, social, and Christian development.

Among the illuminating interpretations of the Rochester social prophet are those by Ray S. Baker in the *American Magazine*, December, 1909, and in *The Spiritual Unrest*, New York, 1910, pp. 260-285.

Three of his students, Justin Wroe Nixon, Henry Burke Robins, and Conrad H. Moehlman, have written numerous articles concerning their teacher and friend. For Dr. Nixon's contributions, see *The Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin*, 1928, number 2 and *The Christian Century*, February, 1929; for those of Dr. Robins, see *Rauschenbusch Memorial Number*, pp. 32-36 and the *Bulletin* 1928, number 3; for those of Moehlman, see *Rauschenbusch Memorial Number*, the *Bulletin*, 1928, number 3, *Fuer Gott und das Volk* by Frick, 1928, pp. 95-102, the *Democrat-Chronicle*, Rochester, N. Y., February 17, 1929.

President Clarence A. Barbour then of Rochester and now of Brown University paid tribute to his colleague in the *Rauschenbusch Memorial Number* and in the *Bulletin*, 1928, number 2.

Thus far the most extensive treatment of Walter Rauschenbusch to appear was written by A. M. Singer and is entitled *Walter Rauschenbusch and His Contributions to Social Christianity*, Boston, 1926.

The various editions of *Who's Who in America* prior to and including 1918 contain summaries of the external facts in the career of Walter Rauschenbusch.

In 1927 the German Department of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School published an *Anniversary Pamphlet* which contains some unique items.

German publications, in addition to the book by Frick, containing materials on Rauschenbusch are *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, second edition, vol. IV, col. 1727; Leonhard Ragaz with *Vorwort* by

Clara Ragaz, *Die religioesen Grundlagen der Sozialen Botschaft*, Leipzig, 1922, pp. 9-36.

Robert A. Farelly recently published various articles in French magazines dealing with Walter Rauschenbusch.

D. R. Sharpe of Cleveland, Ohio, is author of an article entitled: *Walter Rauschenbusch, Social Engineer and Seer of the Kingdom of God*.

When the *Dictionary of American Biography* reaches R, a significant interpretation of the life and writings of Rauschenbusch will appear.

